

ORIGINAL EC COMICS FROM THE 1950s!

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

# THE HAUNT OF FEAR®



NO. 20  
AUG



250  
345  
CANADA

FEAR  
FEAR  
FEAR

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER




THE CRYPT-KEEPER



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELL, BURY ME AT THE BEACH AND CALL ME A SAND-WITCH... IF IT ISN'T TIME TO RUSTLE UP ANOTHER MORBID MENU FROM MY SCREAM-TABLE HERE IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR. YEP, IT'S YOUR HOSTESS IN HEAVES, THE OLD WITCH, FEEDING THE FUMING FIRE UNDER MY GRUDDY CAULDRON, READY TO LADE OUT ANOTHER LURID LUNCHEON OF LOATHSOME LEVITIES. NOW, TIGHTEN YOUR BELTS SO YOU WON'T BUST A BUT WHEN YOU HEAR THIS TASTY TALE OF TERROR, AND I'LL BEGIN THE FOUL FARE I CALL...

## THUMP FUN!



OUTSIDE THE STately OLD MANSION, THE MIST EDDIED AND SWIRLED, WRAPPING ITSELF AROUND THE HOUSE LIKE A FLIMSY GREY SHAWL. OFF IN THE DISTANCE, A DOG HOWLED INTO THE FLUID NIGHT. IN HIS BEDROOM, LUTHER COURTNEY... ELDEST OF THE AGED COURTNEY BROTHERS... SAT BOLT UPRIGHT, SLEEP STILL CLINGING TO HIS BLOODSHOT WRINKLED EYES. A FIGURE STOOD OVER HIM. A FIGURE WITH A KNIFE RAISED OVER ITS HEAD...

WHO... WHO'S THERE?  
MARVIN? MARVIN... ~~WHAT?~~  
MY GOD...

GOOD-BYE,  
DEAR  
BROTHER  
LUTHER...

MARVIN COURTNEY, YOUNGEST OF THE THREE COURTNEY BROTHERS, BROUGHT THE KNIFE DOWN WITH A GRUNT OF EXERTION, PLUNGING IT UP TO THE HILT INTO HIS OLDEST BROTHER'S CHEST. A SHRILL SCREAM ERUPTED FROM LUTHER'S HORRIFIED MOUTH... THEN DIED, GURGLING...



YIIIEE... GSHHHH...

AND NOW...  
UGH... GILBERT  
AND I AM FREE,  
LUTHER...

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE KNIFE CAME DOWN, TEARING, SLASHING, RIPPING AT THE OLD MAN'S CHEST. MARVIN'S RAVING VOICE ECHOED THROUGH THE BEDROOM...



GILBERT! GILBERT! COME SEE!  
COME SEE WHAT I'VE DONE!

THE OLD MANSION LAY SILENT. MARVIN'S CRY ECHOED THROUGH THE LONG DARK CORRIDORS, FACING AWAY...



GILBERT! I'VE KILLED HIM.  
I'VE KILLED LUTHER!  
COME SEE!

STILL NO ANSWER. MARVIN DROPPED THE BLOODY KNIFE AND SCURRIED DOWN THE HALL TO GILBERT'S BEDROOM. HE FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR...

GILBERT, I... I...  
GILBERT, WHERE  
ARE YOU?



GILBERT COURTNEY, THE MIDDLE BROTHER, WAS GONE. HIS BED WAS EMPTY. MARVIN STOOD THERE, STARING... THE REALIZATION DAWNING...



NO, GILBERT! NO! YOU...  
YOU COULDN'T DO THAT  
TO ME!

MARVIN HURRIED BACK TO THE ELDEST BROTHER'S BEDROOM. HE DARTED TO THE SECRET WALL PANEL WHERE LUTHER'D ALWAYS HIDDEN THE FAMILY FORTUNE. IT SLID OPEN, YAWNING...



GONE! THE MONEY'S GONE! GILBERT.  
HE DOUBLE-CROSSED ME! HE...  
HE TOOK THE MONEY AND LEFT  
ME HOLDING THE BAG...

MARVIN TURNED TO LUTHER'S BLOODY BODY, ITS CHEST RIPPED AND TORN, LYING STIFFLY ON THE HUGE BED...



I... I AGREED TO HIS PLAN. I TOLD HIM  
I'D DO IT! AND NOW HE'S GONE, AND  
I'VE KILLED LUTHER FOR NOTHING...

MARVIN LIFTED HIS ELDEST BROTHER'S CORPSE AND CARRIED IT FROM THE BEDROOM...

I... I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF LUTHER'S BODY. I'LL... I'LL BURY IT... IN THE CELLAR!

DEEP DOWN IN THE CELLAR OF THE OLD MANSION, MARVIN OPENED A SAPIING HOLE IN THE SOIL FLOOR...

IF... IF ANYONE ASKS WHERE GILBERT AND LUTHER ARE, I'LL TELL THEM I DON'T KNOW! I'LL... I'LL SAY THEY BOTH DISAPPEARED... AND THE MONEY DISAPPEARED TOO!

HE PUSHED LUTHER'S STIFFENING BODY INTO THE CRUDE GRAVE AND SHOVELLED THE DIRT BACK UPON IT...

AND IF THEY EVER FIND LUTHER'S BODY DOWN HERE, THEY'LL THINK GILBERT KILLED HIM AND RAN OFF WITH THE MONEY. IT WILL SERVE GILBERT RIGHT. HE SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS TO ME!

MARVIN TAMPED DOWN THE SOIL ON LUTHER'S GRAVE AND RETURNED UPSTAIRS. HE WENT INTO THE LIVING-ROOM AND EASED DOWN INTO HIS FAVORITE CHAIR. FOR A LONG WHILE HE SAT THINKING ABOUT THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO HIS HORRENDOUS DEED...

WE ALWAYS HATED LUTHER, GILBERT AND I. WE DESPISED HIM BECAUSE HE CONTROLLED THE FAMILY FORTUNE. IT HAD BEEN LEFT TO HIM. WE WERE NOTHING BUT CHARITY CASES. AND HE LORDED IT OVER US...

LUTHER USED TO TAKE OUT THE CHESTS OF BILLS AND GOLD COINS FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE IN HIS BED-ROOM AND COUNT THEM. EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT HE WENT THROUGH THE RITUAL OF COUNTING THEM, AND GILBERT AND I WOULD WATCH HUNGRILY...

\$251,350. HEH, HEH! A TIDY SUM, EH, MY LOVING BROTHERS?

YES, LUTHER! A TIDY SUM, LUTHER!

LUTHER WOULD ALWAYS REMIND US WHOSE MONEY IT WAS...

REMEMBER, MY DEAR BROTHERS, THIS IS MY MONEY... ALL OF IT! ONLY WHEN I'M DEAD WILL YOU GET ANY OF IT. ONLY WHEN I'M DEAD...

YES, DON'T LUTHER TALK LIKE THAT, LUTHER!

FINALLY, WE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER, SO WE PLOTTED IT. GILBERT AND I PLOTTED LUTHER'S DEATH...

IT'S THE ONLY WAY, MARVIN! WE HAVE TO BEG FOR EACH CENT, HE'S SO MISERLY! WE DESERVE OUR RIGHTFUL SHARE! BUT IF HE WERE DEAD, IT WOULD BE ALL OURS... THE WHOLE FORTUNE!

BUT THAT'S MURDER, GILBERT!



'AT FIRST, I'D OBJECTED. BUT THEN, TONIGHT, I'D AGREED.'

ALL RIGHT, GILBERT, I SEE *NOW* THAT YOU'RE RIGHT! IT IS THE ONLY WAY! ALL RIGHT! WE'LL KILL HIM...

NOW YOU'RE TALKING, MARVIN.

'I'D EVEN VOLUNTEERED. I WANTED TO SPARE GILBERT THE EMOTIONAL SHOCK OF COMMITTING THE DASTARDLY DEED. I LOVED HIM. I WAS YOUNGER THAN HE. SO I'D VOLUNTEERED...'

ARE YOU SURE, MARVIN?

YES, GILBERT. I'M SURE, I WANT TO DO IT!

MARVIN LAUGHED OUT LOUD. HIS LAUGHTER DRIFTED THROUGH THE EMPTY HOUSE...

WHAT A FOOL I WAS. GILBERT MADE A SUCKER OUT OF ME! OF COURSE! HE PLANNED IT THIS WAY!



MARVIN STOOD UP, SHRIEKING...

OF COURSE! GILBERT'S NEXT IN LINE. HE'S OLDER THAN I. WITH LUTNER DEAD, THE MONEY IS RIGHTFULLY MINE! HE WANTED ME TO VOLUNTEER. HE...HE...



MARVIN QUIETED. HE LISTENED. FROM BELOW, FAINT, ALMOST INAUDIBLE, CAME THE STRANGE RHYTHMIC SOUND...

THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP!

WHAT...WHAT'S THAT?



IT WAS AS IF GHOST FINGERS WERE POUNDING ON A SPECTRE-DRUM. IT THROBBED INCESSANTLY, MOVING UPWARD THROUGH THE HOUSE...

THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP! THUM-TNUMP!

IT'S IN THE WALLS! IT... IT SOUNDS... IT SOUNDS LIKE...



THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP...

...LIKE THE BEATING OF A HUMAN HEART!



THE COLD DRAINED FROM MARVIN'S FACE. HE STARED AT THE LIVING-ROOM WALL. BEHIND IT, THE THROBBING SOUND WENT ON...LOUDLY...CONTINUOUSLY...

THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP! THUM-THUMP...

IT'S  
LUTHER...  
COME BACK  
TO HAUNT ME!



HE SCAMPERS HYSTERICALLY DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS...

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP...

I'LL STOP HIM!  
I'LL FIND HIM  
AND STOP HIM!



HE RETURNED, BREATHLESS, WITH THE AXE...

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP...

I'LL GET YOU,  
YOU'RE IN  
THAT WALL,  
AND I'LL...



THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP...

MARVIN CLAPPED HIS HANDS OVER HIS EARS, BUT HE COULDN'T SHUT OUT THE BEATING SOUND. IT CONTINUED, POUNDING...

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!

I WON'T LISTEN! NO!  
I WON'T LISTEN!



HE SWUNG WILDLY, CHOPPING, HACKING, SMASHING A HUGE HOLE IN THE LIVING-ROOM WALL. HE REACHED IN SCREAMING...

WHERE  
ARE YOU?

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!



IT CAME FROM FURTHER DOWN THE WALL. THAT HORRIBLE INCESSANT THROBBING...

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!

I'LL FIND YOU! YOU WON'T  
GET AWAY. I'LL FIND YOU!



HE SWUNG THE AXE AGAIN, SPLINTERING, CRASHING, TEARING ANOTHER HUGE HOLE. THE BEATING STOPPED. HE REACHED IN...

CURSE YOU!  
COME HERE!  
COME HERE!

THUM-THUMP...



THE HEARTBEAT BEGAN AGAIN... FURTHER DOWN THE WALL...

IT BEAT OMINOUSLY, CONTINUOUSLY. HE SCREAMED AFTER IT, SWEARING OATHS, SHRIEKING INVECTIVES, TEARING, SMASHING, CHOPPING HUGE HOLES IN THE LIVING-ROOM WALL, MOVING AFTER IT THROUGH THE HOURS, THE DINING-ROOM, THE LIBRARY...

I'LL GET YOU! I'LL GET YOU YET. I'LL...

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP...

HE STOPPED, AXE RAISED! THE PULSATING SOUND CAME FROM BEHIND THE BOOK-CASE. A BOOK TITLE CAUGHT HIS EYE...

THE... THE TELL-TALE HEART, AND OTHER STORIES, BY... EDGAR ALLEN POE!

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM...

THE THROBBING SOUND STOPPED... SUDDENLY...

HE GASPED, DROPPING THE AXE. HE PULLED THE BOOK FROM THE SHELF, GIGGLING...

THE TELL-TALE HEART, OF COURSE! I REMEMBER!

HE SAT DOWN IN THE HUGE LEATHER LIBRARY CHAIR, SOBING, THE TEARS STREAMING DOWN HIS CHEEKS...

OF COURSE! THE TALE BY POE... ABOUT THE MURDERER WHO BURIED HIS VICTIM BENEATH THE FLOOR BOARDS. I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN...

HE READ... ALOUD... HALF LAUGHING... HALF CRYING...

"FIRST OF ALL I DISMEMBERED THE CORPSE. I CUT OFF THE HEAD AND THE ARMS AND THE LEGS. THEN I TOOK UP THREE PLANKS FROM THE FLOORINGS AND DEPOSITED ALL. NO HUMAN EYE COULD HAVE DETECTED ANYTHING WRONG..."

"THERE WAS NOTHING TO WASH OUT... NO STAIN OF ANY KIND... NO BLOOD SPOT WHATEVER. I HAD BEEN TOO WARY FOR THAT. A TUB HAD CAUGHT ALL... HA, HA!"

"IT WAS FOUR O'CLOCK. AS THE BELL SOUNDED THE HOUR, THERE CAME A KNOCKING AT THE STREET DOOR. I OPENED IT WITH A LIGHT HEART... FOR WHAT HAD I NOW TO FEAR..."

A NEIGHBOR OF YOURS HEARD A SHRIEK!

WE SUSPECT FOUL PLAY!

WE'VE BEEN DEPUTED TO SEARCH THE PREMISES!

I MADE THE THREE DETECTIVES WELCOME...

'I TOOK MY VISITORS ALL OVER THE HOUSE. I BADE THEM SEARCH... SEARCH WELL...'



'THE OFFICERS WERE SATISFIED. THEY SAT AND CHATTED OF FAMILIAR THINGS. BUT ERE LONG I HEARD A LOW, DULL, QUICK SOUND...'

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!



'IT GREW LOUDER... LOUDER... LOUDER! WAS IT POSSIBLE THEY HEARD NOT? NO! NO! THEY HEARD! THEY SUSPECTED! THEY KNEW! THEY WERE MAKING A MOCKERY OF MY HORROR...'

THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!  
THUM-THUMP!



'LOUDER... LOUDER... LOUDER... UNTIL I SHRIEKED...'

VILLAINS! I ADMIT THE DEED! TEAR UP THE PLANKS... HERE! IT IS THE BEATING OF HIS HIDEOUS HEART!



A CALM DESCENDED OVER MARVIN. HE CLOSED THE BOOK, SMILING...

OF COURSE! IT WAS ALL IN MY MIND... JUST AS IN POE'S TALE, THE BEATING OF THE HEART WAS ALL IN THE MURDERER'S MIND!



HE STOOD UP, SIGHING. OUTSIDE, THE DRIFTING MIST WAS LIFTING. IT WAS MORNING, SUDDENLY...

WHAT'S THAT? KNOCKING... ON THE FRONT DOOR!



MARVIN WENT TO THE DOOR. HE OPENED IT. THE THREE MEN STOOD THERE...

GOOD MORNING, MR. COURTNEY! WE'RE FROM THE LOCAL PRECINCT.

WE'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU!

THE... GASP... THE POLICE!?



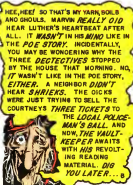
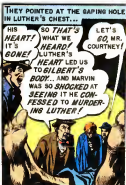
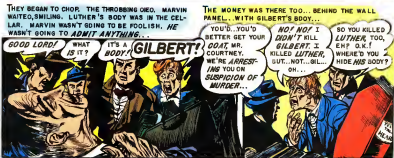
MARVIN STEELLED HIMSELF. HE SMILED. HE WOULDN'T MAKE THE STUPID MISTAKE THE MURDERER IN THE POE STORY MADE. NO, HE'D BE CAREFUL...

COME IN, GENTLEMEN! COME IN!

SAY, WHAT'S GOING ON?

LOOKS LIKE A CYCLONE HIT THE PLACE!





THE VAULT-KEEPER'S

# E.C. CLASSIC

HEH, HEH! AND NOW, FRIENDS... A TREAT!  
LET'S GO BACK INTO THE PAST... BACK  
THREE AND A HALF YEARS... TO THE  
VERY FIRST ISSUE OF MY MAG, THE  
VAULT OF HORROR. LET'S RETCH AGAIN  
TO THIS E.C. CLASSIC...



IT ALL STARTED THE DAY I DECIDED TO RUN AWAY  
FROM RALPH! HE WAS GOING TO KILL ME! I KNEW  
THAT! I HAD TO GET AWAY! I PACKED A SMALL BAG  
AND HAILED A TAXI...

THE RAILROAD TERMINAL...  
AND PLEASE HURRY!

YES,  
MA'AM!



AS THE TAXI SPED DOWNTOWN, I HOOLED IN THE CORNER  
OF THE SEAT... AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT SEE ME! RALPH  
HATED ME SO! I DON'T REMEMBER HOW IT STARTED  
BUT IT HAD DEVELOPED TO A POINT WHERE I FEARED  
FOR MY LIFE! I REMEMBER ONE DAY RALPH CAME  
HOME WITH A PACKAGE...

WHAT DID YOU  
BUY, RALPH?

OH...NOTHING, GLORIA DEAR!  
SOMETHING FOR MY OWN  
PERSONAL USE!



IT WAS POISON! I HAD TO BE ON MY GUARD! I WATCHED THE BOTTLE CAREFULLY AND WHEN I NOTICED SOME OF THE POISON MISSING, I DIDN'T EAT... PRETENDING SOME EXCUSE! I WAS CAREFUL. HE FAILED THAT TIME!

I SAID... HERE'S THE TERMINAL, LADY!

OH... I SEE YOUR PARDON!



I PAID THE FARE, AND LOOKED UP AND DOWN THE STREET! I DIDN'T SEE RALPH! I RUSHED INTO THE STATION!

I... I'D LIKE A TICKET TO... TO... NEW YORK!

THAT'LL BE THIRTY-FOUR TEN, MA'AM!



I STUFFED THE TICKET INTO MY PURSE AND LOOKED AROUND! IF RALPH EVER CAUGHT ME DOING THIS... I GROVE THE THOUGHT FROM MY MIND! NO! I WOULD GET AWAY! I HAD TO! I WOULD BE SAFE THEN! I SAT DOWN ON A BENCH IN A CORNER OF THE WAITING ROOM, AND HID BEHIND A NEWSPAPER.



MY TRAIN WASN'T DUE FOR TWENTY MINUTES! SUPPOSE RALPH CALLED AT HOME? THERE WOULD BE NO ANSWER! HE WOULD KNOW! I THOUGHT OF THAT NIGHT LAST MONTH WHEN I AWAKE TO FIND RALPH STANDING OVER ME... A KITCHEN KNIFE IN HIS HAND...

RALPH!

I... I FOUND THIS KNIFE ON YOUR NIGHT TABLE, GLORIA! YOU... SHOULDN'T LEAVE THINGS LIKE THIS AROUND!



HE HAD STAMMERED OUT A LAKE EXCUSE! HE WAS GOING TO MURDER ME AND I HAD DISCOVERED HIM IN TIME! I DIDN'T SLEEP THE REST OF THAT NIGHT... I JUST LAY THERE... LISTENING...

PARDON ME, MA'AM! THAT'S YOUR TRAIN! YOU'D BETTER HURRY OR YOU'LL MISS IT!

OH... THANK YOU!



I WENT OUT TO THE PLATFORM AND BOARDED THE TRAIN! I FOUND MY SEAT! WHY DIDN'T WE START? I BLANGED OUT OF THE WINDOW! SOMEONE WAS RUNNING DOWN THE PLATFORM! IT... IT LOOKED LIKE...

RALPH!



AS THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE, THE MAN SWUNG HIMSELF UP INTO THE CAR BEHIND MINE! I WASN'T SURE! IT COULD BE RALPH! IT... LOOKED LIKE HIM... ANYWAY... I WAS FRIGHTENED! IT WAS TOO LATE TO GET OFF! THE TRAIN WAS ON ITS WAY.

IT'S... IT'S JUST MY NERVES! I... I NEED A DRINK! I WONDER IF THERE'S A CLUB CAR ON THE TRAIN?





I MADE MY WAY TO THE CLUB CAR! IT WAS SMOKEY AND CROWDED! I SLIPPED ONTO A STOOL AT THE BAR...

WHAT'LL IT BE, LADY?

I... I'LL HAVE A SCOOTCH AND SODA, PLEASE!



THE DRINK BURNED GOING DOWN! I SHUDDERED! SUDDENLY A REFLECTION IN THE MIRROR CAUGHT MY EYE!

...GASP...  
RALPH?



I WAS AFRAID TO TURN AROUND! IT WAS RALPH! I HAD SEEN IN THE MIRROR! HAD HE SEEN ME? I STEPPED AWAY FROM THE BAR AND RAN FROM THE CAR!

OH... I BEG YOUR PARDON!

EXCUSE ME, LADY?



I HAD GONE OUT THE WRONG END OF THE CLUB CAR! I WAS IN A COACH... NOT A PULLMAN! IF I WANTED TO GET BACK TO MY CAR, I WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN...

ER... IS THIS SEAT TAKEN?

WHY, NOT THAT I KNOW OF?



RALPH WOULDN'T LOOK FOR ME HERE IN THE COACHES! HE KNEW I ALWAYS TRAVELED PULLMAN! I SAT DOWN! I WOULD WAIT TILL IT WAS SAFE AND THEN SNEAK BACK TO MY BERTH!



I THOUGHT ABOUT GETTING OFF THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STOP... BUT ALL MY CLOTHES... MY MONEY... MY TICKET... WERE IN THE OTHER CAR! WHY DID HE WANT TO KILL ME? I REMEMBERED ONE NIGHT, ABOUT THE TIME THAT IT ALL STARTED...

GLORIA! I'VE TAKEN OUT SOME INSURANCE POLICES! LIFE INSURANCE! IF... SOMETHING HAPPENS TO EITHER OF US... THE OTHER GETS \$25,000!

OH? I SEE RALPH!



PERHAPS THAT WAS IT! THE MONEY! \$25,000 IS A LOT OF MONEY! SUDDENLY, MY HEART STOPPED! I FELT A HAND ON MY SHOULDER...

YOUR TICKET, MISS?

OH? I... I LEFT IT IN THE OTHER CAR!



THE CONDUCTOR LOOKED AT ME QUIZZICALLY! HE MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS TRYING TO RIDE FREE!

NO, REALLY! I'VE A BERTH BACK IN THE PULLMANS!

YOU'D BETTER SHOW ME, MISS!



AS WE PASSED THROUGH THE CLUB CAR AGAIN, I SEARCHED THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE! RALPH WASN'T THERE! PERHAPS I HAD MADE A MISTAKE! THE DRINK! MAYBE IT HAD BEEN THE SCOTCH AND SODA!

THIS IS MY BERTH! I'LL GET MY TICKET!

ALL RIGHT, MISS!



THE CONDUCTOR WAS SATISFIED! MY BERTH WAS MADE UP, AND SINCE I FELT A LITTLE DIZZY FROM THE DRINK, I DECIDED TO GET SOME SLEEP!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WHO LOOKED LIKE RALPH! I'LL FEEL BETTER IN THE MORNING...



...AND SAFER, TOO! THE TRAIN, HURTLING THROUGH THE NIGHT, WAS PUTTING MORE AND MORE MILES BETWEEN RALPH AND ME! I CLOSED MY EYES! THE TRAIN RUMBLLED ON... AND ON... AND I FELT MYSELF DRIFTING INTO SLEEP... SLEEP...



SUDDENLY I WAS AWAKENED BY AN EAR-SPLITTING, PERCING SHRIEK! I LOOKED OUT OF MY BERTH! THE CURTAINS ON THE OTHER BERTHS WERE ALL CLOSED... AND THE CAR WAS DARK EXCEPT FOR A SMALL LIGHT AT THE REAR! WHAT WAS THAT I HAD HEARD?

...A SCREAM?... OR WAS IT JUST THE TRAIN WHISTLE?



A BERTH AT THE FAR END OF THE CAR WAS MARKED "PORTER". I MADE MY WAY TOWARD IT! I'D ASK HIM IF HE HAD HEARD IT TOO! I PULLED ASIDE THE CURTAIN!

...BASP... NO! NO! EEEEEEEK!



IT WAS GHASTLY! HE WAS DEAD! COLD AND STIFF! HIS EYES, WIDE WITH HORROR... THE BEDCLOTHES SMEARED WITH BLOOD! I CLOSED THE CURTAINS...

HELP!



THERE WAS NO ANSWER! NO ONE STIRRED! I CRIED OUT AGAIN! COULDN'T THEY HEAR ME? FRANTICALLY, I TORE ASIDE THE CURTAINS OF THE NEXT BERTH...

AAAAAAAAAH!



IT WAS HORRIBLE! THE OCCUPANT OF *THAT* BERTH WAS DEAD, TOO! ICY FINGERS GLDSED ABOUT MY HEART! A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEPED OVER ME AS I WENT FROM BERTH TO BERTH, FLINGING THE CURTAINS BACK! THEY WERE DEAD... ALL DEAD! I WAS ON A DEATH TRAIN! RALPH! IT *WAS* RALPH! HE WAS MAD!

HE MUST BE ON THE TRAIN...  
LOOKING FOR ME.



SUDDENLY, I HEARD THE SHRIEK AGAIN... AND I WAS THROWN TO THE FLOOR! THIS TIME IT *HAD* BEEN THE SHRIEK OF BRAKES... THE TRAIN HAD COME TO A STOP...

THIS... THIS IS MY CHANCE!



I RAN TO THE END OF THE CAR AND LEAPED FROM THE TRAIN...

...MY CHANCE TO GET AWAY!



AS I STOOD BEHIND A TREE...WATCHING, THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE! SQUEEING... STRAINING... SLOWLY...IT GAINED MOMENTUM! IT WAS PULLING AWAY... AND I HAD ESCAPED!

NO ONE GOT OFF WITH ME...  
I...I'M SAFE!



I LOOKED AROUND ME? A HOUSE? I SAW A HOUSE ON THE TOP OF THE HILL...AND THERE WAS A LIGHT ON! I MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE GRASS TOWARD IT!

IF THEY HAVE A PHONE, I'LL CALL THE POLICE! THEY COULD STOP THE TRAIN AT THE NEXT STATION..



NEAR THE HOUSE, I NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE? SOMEONE HAD BEEN DIGGING...A YAWNING BLACK PIT... THE SHAPE...OF...

A GRAVE!



NOW I WAS LETTING MY IMAGINATION GET THE BETTER OF ME! I PUSHED THE THOUGHT OUT OF MY MIND! WHY DID I THINK IT WAS A GRAVE? WHAT WAS SO STRANGE ABOUT AN EXCAVATION NEAR A FARM HOUSE? THEY WERE PROBABLY MAKING A WATER TROUGH! I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR...

ANYONE IN THERE? OPEN THE DOOR! PLEASE...



THERE WAS NO ANSWER. THEN, I HEARD THE LATCH CLICK AND THE DOOR SLOWLY SWUNG OPEN...THE RUSTY HINGES CREAKING...

H...HELLO? ANYONE...HOME?



I STEPPED INSIDE! I LOOKED AROUND! THE ROOM WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR

...GASP... A COFFIN!



I SPUN AROUND! THE DOOR WAS CLOSED BEHIND ME... AND STANDING IN FRONT OF IT WAS...

RALPH!

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, GLORIA!



HE CAUGHT ME IN A VISE-LIKE GRIP! I CRIED OUT! I STRUGGLED, BUT I COULD NOT FIGHT HIS OVERWHELMING STRENGTH!

NO NEED TO SCREAM, GLORIA. NO ONE WILL HEAR YOU.

LET ME GO! LET ME GO!



HE FORGED ME TO THE COFFIN!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME, RALPH?

DON'T YOU KNOW, GLORIA?



I COULD DO NOTHING! HE CLOSED THE LID OF THE COFFIN... DOWN UPON ME. AND I HEARD THE SHARP BLOWS OF A HAMMER! HE WAS NAILING ME IN...

RALPH! PLEASE... HAVE MERCY!



THEN I FELT THE COFFIN BEING DRAGGED ACROSS THE FLOOR! I HEARD THE SQUEAK OF THE RUSTY HINGES AS RALPH OPENED THE DOOR...

HE'S TAKING ME OUTSIDE... TO... TO THAT GRAVE!



I FELT THE JAR AND HEARD THE HOLLOW BOOM OF THE COFFIN AS RALPH PUSHED ME INTO THE GRAVE... THEN HIS FIENDISH LAUGHTER... HIS HYSTERICAL RAVING...

GOOD-BYE, GLORIA! SLEEP PEACEFULLY!



HE WAS FILLING IN THE GRAVE! THE SOFT EARTH THUDDED ON THE COFFIN LID! THEN... ALL WAS QUIET! I GUESSED I BROKE DOWN AT THAT POINT...

HELP... SOB... HELP ME... SOMEBODY... PLEASE... PLEASE!



I WAS GRAZED WITH FEAR! I WAS GOING TO SUFFOCATE BURIED ALIVE BY A MADMAN... MY HUSBAND... RALPH! I POUNCED ON THE COFFIN! I COULD FEEL THE FLESH OF MY FISTS TEAR AS I POUNCED! I LOST ALL CONTROL! I SCREAMED AND BEAT THE SIDES OF THE COFFIN...



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A BLINDING LIGHT! I SAT UP WITH A START AND LOOKED AROUND ME...

HERE SHE IS, GENTLEMEN!

YOU'D BETTER STOP THAT RACKET, LADY... AND COME QUIETLY!



I... I HAD BEEN DREAMING! I WAS STILL IN MY BERTH ON THE TRAIN! AND RALPH, WITH PITY IN HIS EYES, WAS COMFORTING ME... STROKING MY HAND!

NO! KEEP AWAY! TAKE HIM AWAY FROM ME! HE WANTS TO KILL ME!

SURE, LADY! SURE! YOU COME WITH US! WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! HE WON'T HURT YOU! WE'LL SEE TO THAT!



THE MEN IN WHITE TOOK ME AWAY! THEY PUT ME IN A NICE HOUSE WITH NICE PEOPLE... A HOUSE THAT HAS BARS ON ALL THE WINDOWS SO RALPH CAN'T GET IN AND KILL ME! AND NOW I'M SAFE FROM HIM!

...AND THAT'S MY STORY! PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO COME AND... VISIT ME SOMETIME AGAIN?



THE END



# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Ruse Cochran

Dear Old Witch,

Re: issue #18; the cover and lead-in picture abound with wonderfully gruesome creepy-crawlies, but they have no tie-in to any of the stories! Was this a way to stimulate sales?

The tie-in in "Pipe Down!", the unusual habit of Andrew, was good use of foreshadowing. The alert reader – and EC readers are alert – knew that quirk would figure prominently later on in the story. Rather like the carousel unicorn's horn in the Dirty Harry movie "Sudden Impact".

"Bedtime Gory!" was a bit of a stretch. A little discretion or a little empathy for the other person would work wonders for the antagonist. But no. To feed their wicked ego (and save the story!), the antagonist has to tell all; to reveal what twisted impulses make them tick, to continue their mistreatment of their fellow humans.

"Pot Shot!" provides just one more reason why one should not smoke (one's tires) when one is under the influence of pot (shot). Just what Amboy gained (besides weight) by being in such a hurry to gain gold is beyond me. He had all he needed anyway, so what was the rush? I guess impetuous in travel, impetuous in all things, eh?

The fate of the incidental character Mrs. Foley's in "The Black Ferris!" seemed deserved. Oh, sure, she helped the plot along a little. But ungrateful! Here the two boys go to a great deal of trouble to warn her, catch their death of colds, and is she appreciative? Nah! I hope they got a nice reward for helping recover her money – like, getting their doctor bills paid.

Bob Gorty

Camarillo, CA

I've never thought Andrew's 'quirk' unusual – doesn't everyone read poetry? We sure do, see almost any installment of The Crypt-Keeper Crumb's "Fine Arts" pages in many of these EC comics! –OW

Dear Mr. Cochran,

Some time ago – February 8, 1995, to be exact – I wrote you to let you know how happy you'd made me with your wonderful chronological-ordered EC reprints. I have no way to know if you ever got said letter. It's a matter of real concern to me that you may learn how much I appreciate and thank your magnificent effort for the survival of that unforgettable line of comics; you are keeping the cauldron bubbling, after over 50 years some misguided people tried to extinguish the flames under it, and that deed of your has much merit, in my opinion, and should be celebrated the way it's entitled to.

Besides, there is the question of getting ALL your reprints at a reasonable cost. I have the problem of limited funds (who doesn't?) and I'm trying to complete the entire collection of your mags, even repeating those I have in

Spanish, Ballantine Paperbacks or East Coast, but my purveyor is now charging me \$40.00 for each volume of 5 mags, and that's quite heavy for my pocket. Not that those splendid comics aren't worth of more, I repeat, but let's also be realistic. I plan to continue buying them at any cost, but would appreciate some cut down in expenses, if possible.

Receive my very warm and sincere applause, and get a friendly handshake from this Southern tiny country, through this letter from your friend.

Carlos M. Federico

Montevideo, URUGUAY

Look at the back issue info at the conclusion of this column, you'll likely get off cheaper buying from us direct. The more you buy, the more you save (on shipping)!

–OW

Russ,

HAUNT OF FEAR #19...EC horror at its very best.

David Dellano

Kensington, CT

Best, bester, bestest!

–OW

NEXT ISSUE



EVERYTHING IS PERFECT, GILBERT. I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE A THING! OH... ER... BUT THERE'S ONE ROOM I DIDN'T SEE, YOU DIDN'T GIVE ME THE KEY.

THAT ROOM IS NOT YOURS! THAT ROOM IS MINE! KEEP OUT OF IT!

Dear OW,

"Sucker Bait" was a vampire story of a different (blood-) type. This was one horror yarn that kept me in the dark right up to the end. The device of using a radio-active isotope to track the vampire seemed wholly original, at least I haven't encountered it before. Well done, Witchy baby!

The bedroom scene in "Lover, Come Back To Me!" must have been pretty racy stuff for a 50s comic (supposedly a kid's medium). It's touches of realism like these (among other things) that made EC the ground-breaking comics publisher we all celebrate today.

Is it just me, or are the "Grim Fairy Tales" awfully same-y? I wish the editors had gotten away from the castles and medieval villages more often.

Give CK the pennant, "Foul Play!" has got to be the most revolting, disgusting, just plain gory terror-tale EC ever printed! Congratulations CK! R.I.P. must stand for "Rest In Pieces" EC you in my screams!

Barry McCollum

Alton, IL

I say our ECs were less a kids-only comic than our competitors' were, at a time when comics were less kids-only than they were for the 30 years following! Better to say comics then MIGHT be seen by any age and should have been designed accordingly. -OW

Dear Old Witch,

HAUNT #18 was a real treat, from the [cover] and the opening pages of "Pipe Down!", both crammed with Ghastly's weird and forbidding cripple-crawley figures - his trademark feature but rarely more fascinating than here - right through to Jack Davis' masterful Bradbury rendition, "The Black Ferris!", with its sinister atmosphere and small-town youth depiction. In previous EC reprint letter columns some people have put down Jack Davis as a not-so-important artist, but I for my part feel that in stories like this he fully proves his worth.

"Bedtime Gory!" is the less interesting of this issue's contents - predictable revenge story weighted down by George Evans' inability to put emotions to his faces (Lorna for instance practically looks the same all through the tale).

But the real gem of the book is the "Grim Fairy Tale," "Pot-Shot!", whose dialogue alone guarantees barrels of belly-laugh (for the reader, that is - the main participant seems to prefer barrels of buckshot). This is one of my all-time EC favorites, and one that I'll frequently turn to for sheer chuckles.

Keep on reprinting right to the end of the run - and preferably beyond!

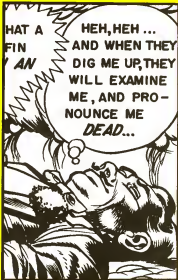
Claus Simonsen

Samsøe, DENMARK

Where Ingels and Davis 'overact,' Evans and Craig characters often play it cool (boy, real cool) until that final, screaming (somebody turned on the lights) panel!

Ya know, as old as the anonymous editor is getting, he may be reprinting FROM beyond! -OW

## NEXT ISSUE



Also available this month are WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED TALES. Watch for HAUNT, CRIME and FRONTLINE COMBAT next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and PANIC! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic!).

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, SOLD OUT; FRONT #1-4, \$2 each, PANIC #1-2, \$2.50 each, all others up thru issue #3, \$1.50 each, CRYPT, W SCI & SHOCK #4-16, and VAULT, W PAN, 2FIST, HAUNT and CRIME #4-15, \$2 each. All others, \$2.50 each. (Latest issues: CRYPT, W SCI, VAULT, W PAN, 2FIST, HAUNT & CRIME are up to 20, FRONT to 9 and PANIC to 2).

Don't forget the entire 15-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION (#1-3, \$1.50 each, #4-15, \$2 each) and the 18 issues of SHOCK SUSPENSESTORIES (#1-3, \$1.50 each, #4-15, \$2.00 each, #16-18, \$2.50 each).

Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

We want MORE letters! Write to:  
HAUNT  
GEMSTONE  
POB 469  
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS  
HAUNT OF FEAR #20 (JUL/AUG 1953)

COVER by Graham Ingels

"Thump Fun!"

"I'ller Train"

"Bloody Sure"

"Hyde and Go Shriek!"

Graham Ingels

N Feldstein

Reed Crandall

Jack Davis

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We will for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically without intent inform and we want unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the individual letter.



Klang! Bang! Thank you, men! Or, women! Sex is not an issue on this page, we're an equal opportunity blow to the heed employer. Erin Tinney, Los Molinos, CA, sends us this take on the fry pen scene in "Slak-Hole", VAULT #5. Her skill with a skillet made sure he won't complain about runny eggs again! Kitchen hints and household tips in THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF...

## FINE ARTS #55



It's been a while since I've run a drawing by our old warhorse, Kurt Krause, Fountain City, WI. These two guys may have seen better days (in fact, that's almost a certainty), but they're looking good here in The Crypt.

-CK

More rhyming words for the yearning herds of poem fans throughout the lands. Now that I've set the tone, take it, Frank... -CK

### THE VAMPIRES

The vampires had a picnic  
(A bloody good affair).  
They brushed off the mold,  
Congealing in their hair.  
A toast to life eternal,  
(Wishing Renfield were there).  
And counting on the Count,  
For a blood type rare!

Frank X. Mattson

Spring City, PA

Send your contribs (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible doublespaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we edit) to:

### THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

GEMSTONE  
POB 469

WEST PLAINS MO 65775

We welcome contributions. We cannot promise to return, acknowledge or publish contributions. We will, for clarity, accuracy and size. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication, to do so we need your address on the individual contribution.

**WALDO KNEW THEY WERE WRONG  
ABOUT ANNA. IN FACT, HE WAS...**

**BLOODY SURE**



WALDO LAY STIFFLY, STARING UP AT THE DARK CABIN CEILING, LISTENING TO THE NIGHT SOUNDS AROUND HIM/HE LISTENED TO THE CHIRPING OF A CRICKET OUTSIDE... THE CROAKING OF A BULLFROG DOWN BY THE CREEK... THE UNEVEN BREATHING OF THE WOMAN LYING BESIDE HIM. ACROSS THE BARE CABIN ROOM, THE BOY STIRRED, TURNING OVER ON HIS COE. HE WAS ASLEEP. WALDO COULD TELL. BUT THE WOMAN LYING BESIDE HIM... HIS BRIDE OF ONLY A FEW HOURS... WAS HOT! SHE WAS PRETENDING TO BE ASLEEP... BUT WALDO KNEW SHE WAS WIDE AWAKE...



I'M RIGHT. I KNOW I'M RIGHT. I STILL WON'T BELIEVE WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT HER. I STILL WON'T BELIEVE THAT SHE'S A VAMPIRE...

THEY'D WARNED WALDO ABOUT THIS WOMAN HE'D MARRIED TONIGHT. THEY'D TOLD HIM THINGS ABOUT HER... THINGS HE WOULDN'T BELIEVE. HE'D COME INTO THE LITTLE SLEEPY TOWN ONE EVENING AFTER SUNDOWN...



HOWDY, STRANGER!

YOU'RE NEW IN THESE PARTS, EH, STRANGER?

YEP. JUST PASSIN' THROUGH. THOUGHT I'D STAY THE NIGHT. KNOW OF ANY PLACE'D PUT ME UP?

AND THEN HE'D SEEN HER. SHE'D COME GLIDING UP THE MAIN STREET LIKE A BLACK-DRAPE ANGEL...



WAL, OLD MAN WATKIN'S GOT A ROOM OVER HIS STORE. MAYBE HE'D...

HOLD UP, JED. LOOK WHO'S COMIN'!

WHO... WHO IS SHE? SHE'S... SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!



THE MOMENT WALOO'O SEEN HER, HE'O WANTED HER. HE'D FELT THE FLAME DOWN DEEP INSIDE HIM LEAP HIGHER AND HIGHER AS SHE NEARED. AND AS SHE'O PASSED, HE'O FELT IT AS A ROARING INFERNO...



EVENING, GENTLEMEN! HMMPH! EVENIN', MA'AM!

THE OTHERS HAD SNUBBED HER, TURNING AWAY. BUT HE'D SMILED, GREETING HER. AND HE'D FELT HER EYES SWEEP OVER HIM... HUNGRIPLY...



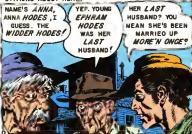
EVENING... STRANGER! THE NAME'S WALDO, NA'AM! WALDO BUCKLY!

SHE'D SMILED AT HIM, NODDED HER HEAD, AND PASSED ON UP THE STREET...



WATCH YOURSELF, STRANGER. DON'T GO GETTIN' NO IDEAS 'BOUT HER, STRANGER! WHO IS SHE?

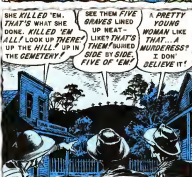
AND THEN THEY'O TOLD WALDO ABOUT HER. THEY'O SPEWED FORTH ALL OF THEIR SUSPICIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT HER...



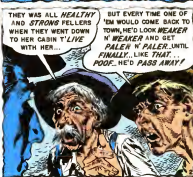
NAME'S ANNA, ANNA HODES, I GUESS. THE WIDDER HODES! YEP. YOUNG EPHRAIM HODES WAS HER LAST HUSBAND! HER LAST HUSBAND? YOU MEAN SHE'S BEEN MARRIED UP MORE'N ONCE?



MARRIED UP FIVE TIMES, STRANGER. AN ALL OF 'EM BIG STRAPPIN' YOUNG BOYS. AN' ALL OF 'EM DEAD NOW. DEAD? WHAT HAPPENED? DOO' KNOW FOR SURE! NONE OF 'EM LASTED MORE'N SIX MONTHS AFTER THEY'D MARRIED UP WITH HER!



SHE KILLED 'EM. THAT'S WHAT SHE DONE. KILLED 'EM ALL! LOOK UP THERE! UP THE HILL! UP IN THE GEMETERY! SEE THEM FIVE GRAVES LINED UP NEAT-LIKE! THAT'S THEM! BURIED SIDE BY SIDE, FIVE OF 'EM! A PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN LIKE THAT... A MURDERESS? I DOO' BELIEVE IT!



THEY WAS ALL HEALTHY AND STRONG FELLERS WHEN THEY WENT DOWN TO HER CABIN T'LIVE WITH HER... BUT EVERY TIME ONE OF 'EM WOULD COME BACK TO TOWN, HE'D LOOK WEAKER N' WEAKER AND GET PALER N' PALER... UNTIL FINALLY... LIKE THAT... POOF... HE'D PASS AWAY!

THEY'D TOLD WALDO WHAT THEY THOUGHT SHE WAS...

SHE'S A VAMPIRE,  
STRANGER! SHE  
SUCKED THEIR  
BLOOD...DRAINED  
'EM ALL...LITTLE  
BY LITTLE...

HER!...A VAMPIRE?  
YOU'RE CRAZY!  
SHE'S NO  
VAMPIRE...

NO?  
LISTEN!  
ONE NIGHT,  
'BOUT TWO  
YEARS AGO,  
I SNUK UP TO  
HER CABIN...



WALDO'D LAUGHED AT THE OLD TIMER'S STORY...

SO WHAT'S SO BAD  
ABOUT FEEDIN' A SICKLY  
HUSBAND STEAK?

EVERY NIGHT? NIGHT  
AFTER NIGHT? I'LL  
TELL YOU. STEAKS...  
NICE RARE STEAKS...  
MAKE BLOOD, STRANGER!



WALDO'D LAUGHED...

WELL, A VAMPIRE  
CAIN'T HAVE NO KID.  
SEE? THAT KILLS  
YOUR THEORY...

WE DON'T  
KNOW IF  
IT'S HER  
KID...



'SHE CAME HERE WITH IT...TEN  
YEARS AGO.'

I'D LIKE TO BUY A  
CABIN FOR ME  
AND MY BABY.  
DO YOU KNOW  
OF ANY?

THE OLD  
FERGERTSON  
PLACE IS UP  
FOR SALE,  
MA'AM!



'AN' I PEEERED IN HER WINDOW. HANK MORTON, HER  
FOURTH HUSBAND WAS ALIVE THEN. HE'D BEEN INTO  
TOWN THAT AFTERNOON AND I'D SEEN WHAT HE  
LOOKED LIKE. SO I WENT UP TO INVESTIGATE...

PLEASE, HANK, HONEY.  
EAT YOUR SUPPER.  
PLEASE, YOU NEED  
THE STRENGTH.

I GAIN'T EAT, MAMA.  
I JUS' GAIN'T! STEAK...  
STEAK...EVERY NIGHT.  
I JUS' GAIN'T EAT ANY  
MORE OF IT!



AND HER KID...THE BOY!  
HE'S SICKLY TOO!  
PALE...LIKE A GHOST,  
HE IS! SHE PROBABLY  
SUCKS HIS BLOOD  
TOO!

HER BOY? YOU  
MEAN SHE'S GOT A  
CHILD?

YEP, HE'S  
TWELVE  
NOW!  
THINNEST,  
SICKLIEST KID  
YOU EVER SNE!



'AN' SHE MOVED IN. AN' AFORE YOU  
KNEW IT, SHE WAS COMIN' DOWN INTO  
TOWN AT NIGHT, SEARCHIN' FOR A  
HUSBAND...

EVENIN',  
MA'AM.

EVENIN'! I'M  
NEW 'ROUND HERE...  
JUST MOVED IN.  
WHAT'S A BODY DO  
FOR ENTERTAINMENT?



THAT'S THE ONLY TIME WE'D EVER SEE HER WAS AT NIGHT. POOR YOUNG MIRAM COTTSON FELL FOR HER FIRST, AND HE WAS DEAD WITHIN THE YEAR. AND THEN SHE WAS BACK AGAIN, IN HER WIDDER CLOTHES, LOOKIN' AGAIN...

SORRY 'BOUT YOUR HUSBAND, MA'AM!

THANK YOU, PHIL.



AND PHIL CRANE WAS SECOND AND BILLY GORDON...THIRD, AND THEN HANK MORTON, AND JUS' REGENT... EPHRAIM HODES. KILLED 'EM ALL. SUCKED THEIR BLOOD, THAT'S WHAT SHE DID!

I STILL WON'T BELIEVE SHE'S A VAMPIRE. IN FACT I'M SURE SHE'S NOT!



WALDO'D LISTENED TO THEIR INSANE THEORY, BUT HE'D KNOWN. DEEP WITHIN HIM, HIS GRAVING FOR THIS BEAUTIFUL WOMAN HAD TOLD HIM THEY WERE ALL WRONG.

DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU, STRANGER.

HERE SHE COMES - BACK UP THE STREET!  
THANKS, GENTLEMEN, THANKS... AND GOOD EVENIN'!



YES, WALDO'D IGNORED THEIR WARNINGS! HE'D LEFT THEM WITH THEIR SUSPICIONS AND SUPERSTITIOUS BLASPHY, AND HE'D MOVED DOWN THE STREET TO THIS BLACK-DRAPE BEAUTY...

EVENIN', ANNA. MIND IF I WALK WITH YOU?

WHY IT'S YOU, MR. BUCKLY. DIDN'T THEY... DIDN'T THEY TELL YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM ME?



THEY TOLD ME LOTS OF THINGS, ANNA. THINGS I WON'T BELIEVE. THINGS I KNOW AREN'T TRUE.

MR. BUCKLY, I... I... CERTAINLY, MR. BUCKLY. I'D BE PROUD TO HAVE YOU WALK WITH ME!



SO, DESPITE THE TOWNSFOLK'S WARNINGS, WALDO'D STARTED SEEING ANNA... AND THERE'D BEEN MANY EVENINGS TOGETHER... AND MANY WALKS...



ANNA... I... I LOVE YOU!

OH, WALDO! WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME? DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY SON?

I KNOW ABOUT HIM! I KNOW THAT HE'S SICK AND WEAK AND NEEDS A FATHER, AND I WANT TO BE HIS FATHER. I WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE...

OH, WALDO... DEAREST!



WALDO LAY STIFFLY...STARING UP AT THE DARK CABIN CEILING...THINKING ABOUT TONIGHT...ABOUT THE HAPPY TRIP TO THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE...

AND DO YOU, WALDO BUCKLY, TAKE THIS WOMAN, ANNA, FOR YOUR LAWFUL WEDDED WIFE?

I DO!



...AND THEN WALDO THOUGHT ABOUT THE HOMECOMING, HOW ANNA'D FUSSED...PUTTING THE BOY TO BED EARLY...AND MAKING THE WEDDING SUPPER...

WHAT YUH COOKIN', ANNA?

STEAK... WALDO...



AND NOW, HE WAS LYING IN THE DARKNESS BESIDE THIS WOMAN...LISTENING TO HER IRREGULAR BREATHING...KNOWING SHE WAS NOT ASLEEP...AND WAITING...

THEY'RE WRONG! THEY MUST BE WRONG. THEY HAVE TO BE WRONG! I'M SURE...

WALDO?



WALDO FROZE. HE TRIED TO REGULATE HIS BREATHING. ANNA WHISPERED INTO THE DARKNESS...



ARE YOU ASLEEP, WALDO?

COULD IT BE HE WAS WRONG? COULD IT BE THE TOWNSFOLK WERE RIGHT? ANNA WAS GETTING UP...MOVING ACROSS THE CABIN BEDROOM FLOOR...TOWARDS THE SLEEPING PALE-FACED BOY...

NOW SHE WAS PUSHING THE COT...NOISELESSLY...SLOWLY...ON WELL-OILED CASTERS...TOWARD THE BED WHERE WALDO LAY, WIDE-AWAKE...FROZEN...WAITING...

ARE YOU ASLEEP, MY BABY?



SOON, DARLING! SOON YOU'LL HAVE WHAT YOU NEED!

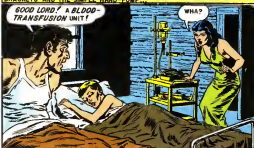
THE BOY! THE BOY'S A VAMPIRE! I DIDN'T THINK...



NOW ANNA WAS MOVING TO THE CABIN CLOSET. WALDO WAITED. THERE WAS STILL TIME. HE'D MAKE SURE...



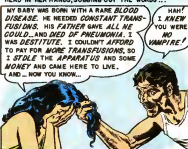
AND NOW ANNA WAS WHEELING IT OUT OF THE CLOSET. THE CONTRAPTION, THE WEIRD LOOKING CONTRAPTION WITH THE COILS OF RUBBER HOSE AND THE TWO LETHAL-LOOKING HOLLOW NEEDLES AND THE CLAMPS AND BRACKETS AND THE SIMPLE HAND-PUMP...



WALDO LEAPED OUT OF BED, LAUGHING. ANNA BACKED AWAY, WIDE-EYED...



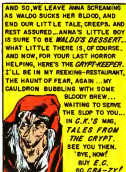
ANNA BEGAN TO CRY. SHE SAT DOWN ON THE BED, HER HEAD IN HER HANDS, SOBBING OUT THE WORDS...



SHE LOOKED UP AT WALDO WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES...



WALDO GRINNED, REVEALING HIS NEEDLE-LIKE FANGS...



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH HEH! AND NOW IT'S YOUR **CRYPT-KEEPER'S** TURN TO **GURDLE** YOUR **BLOOD!** SO CREEP INTO THE **CRYPT OF TERROR**, FIENDS, PLOP DOWN ON THAT **MORRIS CHAIR** THERE... BEING CAREFUL NOT TO DISTURB **POOR DEAD MORRIS**, AND I'LL TELL YOU A **TREMBLE-TALE**. I SEE THAT **O.K.** HAS WOVEN A STORY AROUND POE'S '**THE TALE-TALE HEART**.' WELL, HERE'S **MY OFFERING...** MY **OFFENSIVE OPUS...** A YARN BASED ON STEVENSON'S CLASSIC, '**DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE**.' I CALL THIS SPINE-TINGLER...

## HYDE AND GO SHRIEK!

FAR ACROSS THE CITY, A BANG CLOCK TOLLS THE HOUR... SADLY, MOURNFULLY. IT IS FOUR A.M.. IT IS THE HOUR WHEN THE CITY STREETS, LIT ONLY BY DIM, FAK-SPACED LAMPS, LIE BARKEN AND DESERTED... WHEN THE HOUSES CROUCH SILENTLY, DARKENED AND LOCKED SHUT... WHEN THE LIFE OF THE METROPOLIS SLEEPS, SUSPENDED, WAITING FOR JANGLING ALARM CLOCKS AND THE FIRST RAYS OF DAWN TO AWAKEN IT ONCE MORE. IT IS THE HOUR WHEN THINGS OF EVIL FIND COMFORT... WHEN THEY CRAWL FORTH, UNAFRAID, FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES. ON ONE LONELY STREET IN THE SLEEPING CITY, A FIGURE MOVES... QUICKLY, ANXIOUSLY. A FIGURE OF A MAN. MYRON NORWOOD.

THE **SUCKER!** THE **POOR SAPI!** **AMY** WAS SO **RIGHT** ABOUT HIM! WAIT UNTIL SHE SEES THE **FINAL BANKROLL**. **FIFTY GRAND... CASH...**



THE DESERTED STREET ECHOES THE STACCATO SOUND OF MYRON'S HURRYING FOOTSTEPS. HE PASSES BENEATH A STREET LIGHT, BOUNCING IN ITS GLARE...

EVER SINCE **AMY** PUT ME ON TO HIM, I'VE BEEN **MILKING DOUGH** OUT OF HIM. BUT **TONIGHT...** TONIGHT I MADE MY **BIG KILLING!** AND BEFORE HE **FINDS OUT** I'M A **BIG PHONY**, **AMY** AND I WILL BE ON OUR WAY TO **MEXICO!**



MYRON CHUCKLES AS HE TURNS A CORNER...

I REMEMBER THE DAY AMY TOLD ME ABOUT HIM. 'MYRON', SHE SAID TO ME, 'MYRON, IT'LL BE LIKE TAKING CANDY FROM A BABY! HE'S LOADED, I TELL YOU...'

...LOADED! HIS NAME IS YERGO! HE CAME HERE ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO FROM EUROPE. HE WENT TO NIGHT SCHOOL TO LEARN ENGLISH. HE'S GOT SOME KIND OF TIE-UP IN EUROPE AND HE'S MAKING PILES OF DOUGH.

WHEN DID YOU GET THE JOB, AMY?

A MONTH AGO. HE ADVERTISED FOR A SECRETARY AND I ANSWERED HIS AD. HE TOOK A LIKING TO ME. SO...

ANYBODY'D TAKE A LIKING TO YOU, BABY...

CUT IT OUT, HONEY! NOT NOW! LISTEN, WILL YOU? ANYWAY, HE'S LIKE A KID. AFTER HE LEARNED HOW TO READ ENGLISH, HE STARTED READING EVERYTHING HE COULD GET HIS HANDS ON. AND LAST WEEK, HE READ THIS 'DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE' BOOK...

AND YERGO GOT ALL EXCITED ABOUT IT, EN? HE BELIEVES IT?!

HE WANTS TO BELIEVE IT, HONEY! HE IDENTIFIES THIS MR. HYDE CHARACTER WITH ALL OF HIS OWN FRUSTRATIONS... HIS OWN SECRET LONGINGS. WAIT TILL YOU MEET HIM! HE'S SLY AND TIMID. BUT DOWN DEEP INSIDE, HE'S GOT AN EVIL, SADISTIC, LUSTFUL STREAK IN HIM. I KNOW IT. I'VE SEEN THE WAY HE LOOKS AT ME AT TIMES.

HE TOLD ME HE READS THAT BOOK EVERY NIGHT. HE CONFESSED TO ME THAT IF ONLY HE COULD FIND A WAY, LIKE DOCTOR JEKYLL, TO UNGORK HIS BOTTLED-UP DESIRES, IF ONLY HE COULD FIND THE NERVE TO DO THE DEPRAVED THINGS HE YEARNs TO DO, IF ONLY HE COULD BE UNINHIBITED LIKE MR. HYDE, HE'D BE ECSTATIC! PERSONALLY, I THINK HE'S GOT A SCREW LOOSE SOMEWHERE!

BUT WHERE COULD IT FIT IN, AMY... A SECOND-RATE CONSULTANT CHEMIST?

IF YERGO THOUGHT YOU COULD RECOVER DR. JEKYLL'S SECRET FORMULA... IF HE THOUGHT YOU COULD MAKE HIM INTO A MR. HYDE, HE'D PAY ALMOST ANYTHING! AND YOU COULD PHONY THE WHOLE THING... CARRY ON FAKE RESEARCH... CHARGE FOR PHONY EQUIPMENT... TAKE HIM FOR PLENTY. WE COULD CASH IN!

OKAY! TOMORROW, STEER THE CONVERSATION AROUND TO IT AND DROP MY NAME. TIP ME OFF SO I'LL BE READY FOR HIM.

THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET LAMP CASTS AN EERIE GLOW ON MYRON'S GRIM FACE AS HE PASSES BENEATH IT... HURRYING...

ANY WAS CLEVER. THE VERY NEXT DAY, YERGO PHONED ME... AND THAT EVENING, THE CHARACTER WAS IN MY LABORATORY...



IN OTHER WORDS, MR. YERGO, YOU WANT ME TO DUPLICATE OR, JEKYLL'S EXPERIMENTS AND DEVELOP A FORMULA TO TURN YOU INTO A 'MR. HYDE'!



YA, MEESTER NORVOOD. DAT IZ VOT I WANT. I WANT TO BE ABLE TO ENJOY DOING THINGS THAT I AM AFRAID TO DO NOW BECAUSE I WOOD FEEL GUILTY.

'YERGO OPENED HIS DOG-EARED COPY OF "DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE..."

I WANT TO BE ABLE TO DO VIOLENT AND EXCITING THINGS LIKE MR. HYDE... LIKE THIS! LISTEN...



"MR. HYDE HAD IN HIS HAND A HEAVY CANE. THE OLD GENTLEMAN TOOK A STEP BACK, AND AT THAT MR. HYDE BROKE OUT OF ALL SOUNDS AND CLUBBED HIM TO THE EARTH..."



...AND THE NEXT MOMENT, WITH APE-LIKE FURY, HE WAS TRAMPLING HIS VICTIM UNDER FOOT AND HAILING DOWN A STORM OF BLOWS, UNDER WHICH THE BONES WERE AUDIBLY SHATTERED..."

\* THE MAN (MR. HYDE) WAS STUMPING ALONG, AND THE GIRL OF EIGHT OR TEN WAS RUNNING AS HARD AS SHE WAS ABLE. THEN CAME THE HORRIBLE PART OF THE THING, FOR THE MAN TRAMPLED OVER THE CHILD'S BODY...



...AND LEFT HER SCREAMING ON THE GROUND!"

'YERGO'S VOICE WAS HIGH-PITCHED AS HE READ. HE PAUSED, GASPING, LOOKING AT ME WILGLY. THEN HE GRINNED DEEPLY AS HE FURIOUSLY FLIPPED PAGES...

SEE? SEE? MR. HYDE WAS STRONG... NOT WEAK LIKE ME. I WANT TO BE CAPABLE OF THE THINGS MR. HYDE WAS CAPABLE OF... CRUEL, SADISTIC THINGS... LIKE... LIKE THIS...



'YERGO SHUT THE BOOK REVERENTLY, HIS CHEST HEAVING. HE WAS EMOTIONALLY SHATTERED BY THE PASSAGES HE'D JUST READ. THE GUY WAS OFF HIS ROCKER, ALL RIGHT. IT WAS GOING TO BE SUCH EASY PICKINGS...'

AND THAT IS WHAT YOU WANT? YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO DEGENERATE INTO A... A 'MR. HYDE'?

YA, DAT IZ VOT I WANT! CAN YOU DO IT?





MYRON STEPS OFF THE CURB AND  
CROSSES THE SILENT STREET. HE  
SHUDERS...

THE GUY WAS DULL... REAL NAIVE!  
BUT IT WAS A CHANCE TO PICK UP  
SOME EASY DOUGH. I WAS  
HAPPY TO PLAY ALONG... PLAY  
ALONG TO THE HILT...

IT IS PROBABLE, MR YERGO,  
THAT AFTER CAREFUL  
PERUSAL OF THE STORY  
I WOULD BE ABLE TO  
FIND CLUES AS TO THE  
POSSIBLE CHEMICAL  
MAKE-UP OF THE  
FORMULA. BUT IT  
WILL TAKE RESEARCH  
TO DEVELOP IT...

I AM  
WILLING  
TO PAY,  
MEESTER  
NORWOOD!

RESEARCH COSTS A GREAT  
DEAL, MR. YERGO. THERE'RE  
EQUIPMENT COSTS... GUINEA  
PIGS... CHEMICALS...  
INSTRUMENTS, AND THERE'S  
MY TIME...

WILL A  
CHECK  
FOR  
\$1000  
COVER  
IT?

IT'LL DO FOR A STARTER,  
MR. YERGO, AND I CAN'T  
GUARANTEE RESULTS  
RIGHT OFF THE  
BAT, BUT...

TAKE YOUR TIME,  
MEESTER NORWOOD.  
IF YOU NEED MORE  
MONEY, PLEASE LET  
ME KNOW. AND NOW,  
I MUST LEAVE...

'AFTER YERGO BLEW, AMY CAME OUT OF HER HIDING  
PLACE AND I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS. WE BOTH LAUGHED  
OUT LOUD...

LOOK, BABY. A CHECK...  
FOR A THOUSAND  
BUCKS!

OH, HONEY. I TOLD  
YOU. JUST STRING HIM  
ALONG... AND THERE'LL  
BE PLENTY MORE.

'WHAT A TIME AMY AND I HAD SPENDING THAT DOUGH!  
WE BOUGHT NEW CLOTHES, HIT THE BEST NIGHT CLUBS,  
AND TOASTED OUR NEW-FOUND BANKROLL...

TO MR. YERGO... THE  
SUCKER. MAY HIS  
CHECKS KEEP  
COMING...

...AND GROWING.

'AND JUST TO MAKE IT LOOK GOOD, I BOUGHT A  
DOZEN GUINEA PIGS, AND SET UP INTRICATE AND  
IMPRESSIVE APPARATUS ALL AROUND THE LAB...

I WAS FREE TONIGHT,  
MEESTER NORWOOD, SO I  
DROPPED BY TO SEE  
IF YOU WAS MAKING  
ANY PROGRESS...

WELL, A LITTLE,  
MR. YERGO. I THINK  
I'VE FOUND SOME-  
THING! YOU REMEM-  
BER, IN THE BOOK,  
WHEN JEKYLL TALKS  
ABOUT THE PHOSPHORUS  
SALT...

MYRON GRINS EVILY, THE STREET-LIGHT REFLECTING ON HIS YELLOW TEETH...

WHAT A PHONY LINE OF HOGWASH I HANDED HIM. I QUOTED A FEW LINES FROM THE STORY, AND THEN GAVE HIM SOME CHEMICAL-DOUBLE-TALK TO EXPLAIN IT...



...AND I THINK THAT IF I WORK ALONG THOSE LINES, I MAY FIND WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR!



GOOD. GOOD. VEL, THANK YOU, AND...



OH, ONE THING, MR. YERGO. I'LL NEED SOME MORE MONEY. THIS EQUIPMENT USED UP ALL THAT YOU GAVE ME!

OH? I SEE! VEL...OF COURSE. SHALL WE MAKE IT \$5000, THIS TIME?



'WHAT IS THERE ABOUT FURS THAT TURNS A NORMAL WOMAN INTO A PASSIONATE FLAMING ANIMAL? I REMEMBER THE NIGHT I BOUGHT ANY THAT MINK COAT WITH THE DOUGH FROM YERGO'S SECOND CHECK...'

OH, MYRON...IT'S BEAUTIFUL... BEAUTIFUL. YOU'RE SO GOOD TO ME...

BABY...



'ANOTHER \$5000 CHECK. MORE WILD TIMES FOR ANY AND ME...'

DO YOU THINK HE'LL CATCH ON, MYRON? I MEAN...WELL, I LIKE THE WAY THINGS ARE LATELY, SO LIKE THEM TO CONTINUE!

HE'S TOO THICK TO CATCH ON, BABY! HE SWALLONS EVERY PHONY THING I TELL HIM. DON'T WORRY, I'LL STRING HIM ALONG.



'AND WHAT A SHOW I'D PUT ON FOR GLUNK HEAD WHENEVER HE CAME TO THE LAB. DRY ICE IN BEAKERS OF WATER BUBBLING MYSTERIOUSLY AND GIVING OFF CLOUDS OF EERIE-LOOKING VAPOR...RETORTS BOILING... TITRATIONS ACCOMPLISHING NOTHING...AMMONIA FOUNTAINS...COLOR CHANGE REACTIONS WITH INDICATORS! YERGO WOULD LOOK AROUND WIDE-EYED...'

ANYTHING NEW, MEESTER NORWOOD?

WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK, MR. YERGO. I'M SURE OF IT, BUT... I'LL NEED SOME MORE MONEY...



'I THOUGHT UP THE CRAZIEST COMBINATIONS OF HARMLESS CHEMICALS TO INJECT INTO THOSE POOR GUINEA PIGS WHEN YERGO CAME AROUND. HE'D WATCH, COMPLETELY TAKEN IN BY THE WHOLE FRAUD...'

DO YOU THINK THIS FORMULA WILL WORK, MEESTER NORWOOD?

WE'LL SEE IN A MOMENT, MR. YERGO. THERE...



THE CORNER IS JUST AHEAD. THE CORNER WHERE MYRON IS TO MEET ANY. HE BREATHEES HARDER NOW, GIGGLING...

OF COURSE, NOTHING EVER HAPPENED TO THE GUINEA PIGS. SOME OF THEM GOT CASES OF NIVES OR ASTHMA! BUT THAT WAS ALL! AND I LED YERSD DH... FOOLED HIM ALL THE WAY...



'AND THEN, ONE DAY, AFTER MIXING UP ONE OF MY WEIRD COMBINATIONS AND INJECTING IT INTO A GUINEA PIG...'

WHY... WHY...  
GOOD LORD!  
IT'S...

LOOK, MEESTER  
NORWOOD. IT IS  
CHANGING!



'FRANKLY, I WAS PUZZLED AT THE GUINEA PIG'S REACTION! IT SEEMED TO GROW VERY FIERCE...IT SQUEELED AND DARTED WILDLY ABOUT THE CAGE! BUT...

THAT'S IT, MISTER  
YERGD. WE'VE GOT  
IT!

GIVE IT TO  
ME. GIVE  
IT TO ME.



WAIT! YOU CAN'T TAKE IT YET! I HAVEN'T DEVELOPED AN ANTIDOTE! YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE IT WITHOUT THE ANTIDOTE, DO YOU?

NO! NO! OF  
COURSE NOT.  
BUT HOW LONG...

NOT VERY LONG, MR. YERGD. BUT I'LL WANT MORE MONEY! A LOT MORE! FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS... AS MY FEE! SO FAR, I HAVEN'T MADE A PENNY...

FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS? NO! THIS IS A HOLDUP! A ROBBERY!



HE PAID. I DEMANDED IT IN CASH AND HE TROTTED OFF TO GET IT. I QUICKLY ANALYZED WHAT I'D GIVEN THE GUINEA PIG...

WELL, THIS CONJUNCTIONER IS SLIGHTLY ACID IN CHARACTER! THAT POOR GUINEA PIG DEVELOPED NOTHING MORE THAN AN ACID STOMACH... PROBABLY PAINFUL! THE 'ANTIDOTE' IS SIMPLE. SODIUM BICARBONATE... BAKING SODA!

WHEN MR. YERGD RETURNED, I HAD A FLASK OF THE RIDICULOUS FORMULA READY. I'D SEALED A PAPER WITH THE WORDS 'BICARBONATE OF SODA' INTO AN ENVELOPE...

HERE IS YOUR FORMULA, AND IN THIS ENVELOPE I'VE WRITTEN THE ANTIDOTE! NOW... THE MONEY...

JUST YUN MOMENT, MEESTER NORWOOD. HOW DO I KNOW THIS FORMULA REALLY WORKS?

I POURED A FEW DROPS OF THE PHONY FORMULA INTO A BEAKER. AFTER ALL, WHAT DID I HAVE TO LOSE? A SLIGHT ACID STOMACH IN EXCHANGE FOR FIFTY GRAND...

HERE...WATCH!



I GAVE YERGO THE BEST ACT I COULD MANAGE. I SHUDDERED! I GRITTED MY TEETH! I MOANED! I SHARLED! I RAVED! I SCREAMED...

YAAAGGH... IT... IT DOES WORK!



HE WATCHED, GRIMMING IDIOTICALLY. WHEN HE LOOKED CONVINCED, I CALMED DOWN. I GASPED...

THERE! YOU SEE? AND I ONLY TOOK A DROP OR SO! A GREATER AMOUNT, OF COURSE, WOULD LAST INDEFINITELY... AND REQUIRE THE ANTIDOTE!

THANK YOU, MEESTER MORWOOD! THANK YOU...



MYRON STOPS AT THE CORNER BEFORE THE DARKENED STORE WINDOW. IN THE DISTANCE, HIGH HEELS CLICK OVER THE EMPTY STREETS...

HEH, HEH! WHY RIGHT NOW, THE JERK IS PROBABLY ROLLING ON THE FLOOR OF HIS APARTMENT WITH THE WORST DARN BELLY ACHE HE'S EVER... HAD...

OH, MY GOD!



MYRON STARES AT HIS REFLECTION IN THE STORE WINDOW...

GOOD LORD! THAT CONCOCTION...



THE CLICKING HEELS SOUND CLOSER NOW...

AMY IS COMING. MYRON LOOKS ABOUT WILDLY...

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE SHE GETS HERE! I HAVE TO... TO... THE ANTIDOTE! BICARBONATE OF SODA. IT COULD REALLY WORK! THE STUFF WAS ACIDIC! THERE! IN THE WINDOW...

MYRON! IS THAT YOU?



THE SHATTERING OF GLASS ECHOES DOWN THE DESERTED STREET. MYRON REACHES IN, SNATCHING A BOX OF BICARBONATE FROM THE DRUG STORE WINDOW. IT COLLAPSES IN HIS HAND...

PHONY! THE BOX IS A PHONY! A FRAUD! JUST LIKE ME... AND... AND HER! SHE GOT ME INTO THIS!

MYRON?



MYRON TURNS. NOW HE IS EVERYTHING THAT HYDE WAS... ALL OF THE EVIL AND FILTH AND VIOLENCE...

EEEEEE... GH!



HEH, HEH. POOR AMY! SHE ENDED UP SPLATTERED ALL OVER THE SIDEWALK BECAUSE MYRON'S AND HER PHONY SCHEME TURNED OUT TO BE FOR REAL! AND THE BICARB IN THE WINDOW DISPLAY TURNED OUT TO BE FOR PHONY! I'M SURE THERE'S A MORAL HERE SOMEWHERE, BUT I'M TOO LAZY TO FIGURE IT OUT! NO MATTER! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT! TILL THEN KIDDIES, STAY IN THE SUN AND TAN YOUR HYDE!



FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO  
THE HAUNT OF



NO. 21  
OCTOBER



10¢

# FEAR<sup>®</sup>

FEATURING



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER





# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! DO YOU GOT YOUR GRIMY FANGS ON A GRIMY DIME AND NOW YOU'RE READY FOR ANOTHER GRIMY VISIT INTO THE GRIMY HAUNT OF FEAR. WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE LOOKIN' PALE AND SICKLY. COME IN AND FEEL PALE AND SICKLY WHILE I LADLE OUT THE LATEST RECKING RECIPE FROM MY CRUCIOY CAULDRON. YEAH! IT'S YOUR BINNER-CHEF, HOSTESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO SERVE THE TASTY TALE OF TERROR ENTITLED...

## AN OFF-COLOR HEIR



LAURA RAIS STOOD BEFORE THE IMPOSING PORTRAIT, THE TEARS STREAMING DOWN HER FACE, HER NERVOUS FINGERS TIGHTLY CLUTCHING THE BOTTLE AND THE SMALL BAG OF COTTON. SHE STARED IN HORROR AT THE SOMBER FACE ON THE OLD CANVAS WITH ITS DARK FOREBODING EYES AND ITS UMBRELL WHITE BEARD.



LAURA LOOKED AROUND WILDE. HER GLANCE FELL UPON THE COFFEE TABLE BEHIND HER. SHE BENT AND PLACED THE BOTTLE OF COLORLESS LIQUID AND THE WAD OF COTTON UPON IT AND GRABBED IT TO THE FIREPLACE OVER WHICH THE PORTRAIT HUNG...



GASP... GASP...

LAURA WAS FRIGHTENED. HER BREATH CAME IN SHORT CHOKING PANTS AND HER HEART BEAT MADLY IN HER HEAVING CHEST. SHE POKED UP THE BOTTLE AND THE COTTON AND CLIMBED UP ONTO THE COFFEE TABLE...



SHE STOOD THERE, HESITANTLY, STARING AT THE PORTRAIT. THE BEARING FACE STARED BACK AT HER WITH ANGRY EVIL EYES...



HIS EYES FELL TO THE NEATLY ENGRAVED NAME-PLATE FASTENED TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PORTRAIT'S FRAME...

"HAPON BILLES DE RAIS" WHY DOES IT SOUND SO FAMILIAR? WHO IS IT? I'VE GOT TO FIND-OUT!



LAURA TIPPED THE BOTTLE AND POURED ITS CONTENTS UPON THE WAD OF COTTON. THE FAMILIAR SMELL OF THE COLORLESS LIQUID DRIFTED UPWARD...



THE FAMILIAR SMELL... IT BROUGHT BACK MEMORIES. THE CLUTTERED STUDIO IN GREENWICH VILLAGE IN NEW YORK... THE STRUGGLING YEARS OF STUDY AND HARD WORK AND LAURA'S FIRM DETERMINATION...

"SOMEDAY I'LL BE A SUCCESSFUL PORTRAIT PAINTER. SOMEDAY I'LL BE FAMOUS!"



THE MEMORIES OF LAURA'S PAST SWIFT BEFORE HER EYES. THE OLD GILBERT RAIS CAME TO HER STUDIO...

"MY NAME IS RAIS, MISS HAPON. GILBERT RAIS. I'M FROM LOUISIANA. I'VE COME TO NEW YORK TO HAVE MY PORTRAIT PAINTED. A MUTUAL FRIEND RECOMMENDED YOU..."





LAURA REMEMBERED THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED. THOSE WONDERFUL WEEKS OF SILBERT POSING FOR HER, WHILE SHE MOULDED HIS LIKENESS IN OILS AND SPREAD IT UPON HER CANVAS.

... THE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION THAT SOON BECAME MORE THAN JUST THAT. THOSE WONDERFUL DAYS OF PAINTING HIS PORTRAIT, AND THOSE WONDERFUL NIGHTS ... DINING TOGETHER ... DANCING TOGETHER ... AND FALLING IN LOVE.



THAT WILL BE ALL FOR TODAY, MR. RAIS. THE LIGHT IS FADING.

I WAS WONDERING, MISS HARBERT MAY I TAKE YOU TO DINNER?



TOMORROW YOUR PORTRAIT WILL BE FINISHED, SILBERT, AND YOU WILL BE GOING SOUTH WITH ME.

COME WITH ME, LAURA. COME TO LOUISIANA WITH ME. BE MY WIFE...



SILBERT ARE YOU PROPOSING?

I HAVE A HUGE MANSION DOWN IN THE LOUISIANA BAYOUS, LAURA. YOU'LL LOVE IT THERE. SAY YOU'LL MARRY ME?

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D MADE UP HER MIND. THREW AWAY HER DREAMS OF A CAREER AS A PORTRAIT PAINTER, ... AND ACCEPTED SILBERT'S PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

YES, SIR, DARLING YES... I'LL MARRY YOU!

LAURA, SWEET.

... THE SIMPLE CEREMONY UNITING LAURA AND SILBERT RAIS. MAKING THEM ONE, MAKING THEM MAN AND WIFE...



... THE WONDERFUL AIRPLANE TRIP SOUTH. LOOKING DOWN AT THE COUNTRY SWIFT BY BELOW THEM LIKE SOME FAIRY CARPET.



HAPPY, DARLING?

DELICIOUS, SIR.

AND THEN LAURA REMEMBERED THE SEEMINGLY UNENDING AUTO TRIP OUT OF NEW ORLEANS INTO THE SILENT MYSTERIOUS BAYOU. THE MILES AND MILES THROUGH MERE-LADEN CYPRESS TREES, TILL FINALLY...



WELL, THERE SHE IS, LAURA! 'TIFFANUS'! THE FAMILY PLANTATION HOUSE.

SHUL! IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D FELT WHEN SHE'D FIRST SEEN 'TUFFANCES'. SHE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D SHIVERED AS IT LOOKED UP BEFORE THEM, STARK WHITE AND GIGANTIC-LOOKING, WITH AN AIR OF MYSTERY ABOUT IT.

SHE REMEMBERED HOW GILBERT HAD SMILED AS THEY'D MOUNTED THE COLOURED PONTONS.

YES, IT HAS **TWENTY-TWO** ROOMS, AND THEY'RE ALL READY TO GO WITH AS YOU LIKE.

IT'S... IT'S SO **SOFT** OUT HERE IN THE BAYOUS, GIL... WITH ONLY THE SOUNDS OF THE BIRDS AND THE MARSH ANIMALS.



THE HOUSE IS OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS OLD, LAURA. MY ANCESTORS BUILT IT WHEN THEY CAME HERE FROM FRANCE!

IT'S... IT'S VERY BIG, GILBERT!

...HOW THE LOOK HAD COME INTO HIS EYES.

YES, THAT'S WHY I LOVE IT HERE. IT'S SO FAR FROM CIVILISATION...

I'M **ONLY** OUT HERE, GILBERT. LET'S GO INSIDE!



AND THEN SHE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D STOPPED...STUNNED...AND THE FEARS RETURNED...AS SHE CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE PORTRAIT OVER THE FIRE-PLACE.

WHO...WHO'S THAT, GIL?

ONE OF MY ANCESTORS, LAURA.



LAURA REMEMBERED HOW THE SIGHT OF THE HUGE LIVING ROOM WITH ITS PRICELESS ANTIQUES HAD ALMOST TAKEN HER BREATH AWAY. SHE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D PLUTTERED ABOUT LIKE A LITTLE CHILD TOUCHING EACH EXQUISITE PIECE OF FURNITURE, HER FEARS OUTSIDE FORGOTTEN.



OH, GIL! EVERYTHING IS SO... SO PERFECT!

I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT, LAURA!

...THE PORTRAIT...THE FRIGHTENING FACE WITH ITS DARK EVIL EYES AND THE COARSE WHITE BEARD. THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

'BARON GILLES DE RAIS, 1884'

YOU DON'T KNOW THAT, DO YOU?



THERE WAS SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THAT OLD PORTRAIT...SOMETHING ABOUT THE FINELY-CRACKED CARVING AND THE METICULOUSLY-PAINTED FACE AND THE COARSE WHITE BEARD.

YOU DON'T KNOW MY ANCESTOR WAS A FRENCH BARON!

NO, GIL! NOW...HOW THRILLING!



LAURA REMEMBERED THOSE FIRST  
FEB WEEKS AT 'TIFFANY'...THE JOY  
OF BEING ALONE WITH GIL, HER NEW  
HUSBAND. AND THEN, ONE DAY...

GIL! YOU'RE  
PACKING? I  
WHERE ARE  
YOU GOING?

IT TAKES  
MONEY TO  
REFURNISH A  
HOUSE LIKE  
THIS, DARLING.  
I'VE GOT TO MAKE  
A BUSINESS TRIP!  
CHECK MY INTER-  
ESTS!

HOW LONG  
WILL YOU  
BE GONE, GIL?

NOT LONG,  
DEAR. A FEW  
DAYS. YOU'LL  
HAVE LOTS TO  
DO, SO THROUGH  
THE HOUSE.  
OPEN UP ALL THE  
ROOMS. HERE ARE  
THE KEYS...

DECIDE HOW YOU WANT  
TO DECORATE EACH  
ROOM. THAT OUGHT  
TO KEEP YOU BUSY  
TILL I GET BACK.

ALL RIGHT,  
GIL. BUT  
HURRY, WON'T  
YOU? I... I  
HATE TO BE  
ALONE...

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D WATCHED FROM THEIR  
BEDROOM WINDOW AS GIL WAVED AND DROVE OFF DOWN  
THE CYPRESS-LINED BAYDO ROAD...

...HOW THE SILENCE SEEMED TO CLOSE IN AROUND  
HER... AND NOW THAT STRANGE FEELING, THAT FEAR,  
SUDDENLY SEEMED TO GRIP HER. SHE'D STARED  
DOWN AT THE KEYS...

"WELL, NO USE SITTING AROUND *HOPING*—  
MIGHT AS WELL *EXPLORE* MY NEW HOME!"

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D GONE FROM ROOM TO  
ROOM, UNLOCKING EACH DOOR, AND GASPING WITH  
PLEASANT SURPRISE...

...AND THEN, LAURA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D COME  
TO THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL ON THE  
VERY TOP FLOOR OF THE OLD MANSION...

HOW EXQUISITE. I WOULDN'T WANT  
TO CHANGE A THING IN THIS ROOM.  
NOT A *STITCH*. IT'S...IT'S  
LOVELY.

IN FACT,  
EVERY ROOM  
IS LOVELY.

THAT'S FUNNY. NONE OF THESE  
KEYS FIT THIS LOCK...

THE MYSTERIOUS ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL ON THE TOP FLOOR, LAURA REMEMBERED THE FRUSTRATION AT NOT BEING ABLE TO UNLOCK THE DOOR. THE NATURAL CURIOSITY THAT GREW WITHIN HER...

“TWENTY-ONE? TWENTY-TWO? TWENTY-THREE? THERE ARE TWENTY-THREE ROOMS IN THIS HOUSE, BUT, GILBERT SAID THERE WERE ONLY TWENTY-TWO? I WONDER WHY? I WONDER WHAT'S IN THAT ROOM THAT HE WANTS TO HIDE?”

AND SHE REMEMBERED WALKING DOWN INTO THE LIVING-ROOM AND STARRING UP AT THE PORTRAIT OF THE MAN WITH THE DARK FOREBODING EYES AND THE WAITED WHITE BEARD AND FEELING THAT CHILL ENVELOPE HER... MAKING HER SHIVER.

“WHAT IS THERE ABOUT THAT PAINTING THAT SEEMS SO STRANGE? IS IT THE FACE? THE NAME ‘BARON GILLES DE RAS’? IS THAT NAME FAMILIAR?”

AND LAURA REMEMBERED HOW HER HEART INCREASED... HOW HER LONG-LIMBS MADE HER NERVOUS... AND THE BOUNDS AT NIGHT, KEEPING HER AWAKE, MAKING HER THINK... ABOUT THE ROOM WITHOUT A KEY... THE PAINTING...

...AND FINALLY, THE RELIEF WHEN GILBERT RETURNED...

“OH, GILBERT, I... SOB... I MISSED YOU!”

“HOW ARE YOU DARLING? WELL, DID YOU DECIDE ABOUT THE REDECORATING?”

“EVERYTHING IS PERFECT GILBERT, I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE A THING! OK, OK... BUT THERE'S ONE ROOM I DON'T SEE, YOU DIDN'T GIVE ME THE KEY.”

“THAT ROOM IS NOT YOURS! THAT ROOM IS MINE! KEEP OUT OF IT!”

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW GILBERT'S EYES GREW DARK LIKE THE EYES IN THE PORTRAIT.

“BUT... NOO! GILBERT! WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?”

“NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! JUST STAY AWAY FROM THAT ROOM. YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU LIKE WITH THE OTHERS, BUT STAY AWAY FROM THAT ONE.”

AND LAURA REMEMBERED HOW THE NEXT MORNING, GILBERT DID NOT SHAVE.

“BUT, YOU'RE SO BEEST-LOOKING, GILBERT!”

“I'M GROWING A BEARD, LAURA, I REALLY HAVE TO SHAVE, SO, UNTIL MY NEXT BUSINESS TRIP...”

LAURA REMEMBERED HOW STRANGE EVERYTHING WAS AFTER THAT. HER NERVOUSNESS, HER CURIOSITY ABOUT THE ROOM, GILBERT'S BEARS, BLACK AND SILKY, GROWING THICKER EACH DAY, UNTIL...



I HAVE TO GO ON ANOTHER BUSINESS TRIP TOMORROW, LAURA.

OH?

THE ROOM. THE PORTRAIT. WHAT WAS THERE THAT BOTHERED LAURA? SHE REMEMBERED GOING THROUGH GILBERT'S POCKETS THAT NIGHT... AND FINDING THE KEY...



...THE KEY TO THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL ON THE TOP FLOOR?

WHEN LAURA'D AWAKENED THE NEXT MORNING, GILBERT WAS GONE. SHE'D HURRIED TO THE BATHROOM, TORTURED WITH BITING CURIOSITY...

SHE'D STARED DOWN AT THE BOTTLE ON THE SINK.



NOW I'LL SEE WHAT'S IN THAT ROOM, I... I...



WHAT'S THIS? "BLACK DYE"? "TINTS GREYING HAIR BLACK"? OH, NO!

LAURA'D LAUGHED... SO GILBERT WAS GETTING GREY AND HE WAS DYING HIS HAIR. SHE'D LAUGHED AT HIS BOYISHNESS, KEEPING SECRETS...



THE DOOR IS DEAD...

SHE'D SPURRED QUICKLY AND RUSHED TO THE TOP FLOOR... TO THE DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL. SHE'D INSERTED THE KEY NERVOUSLY... TURNED THE LATCH...

AND SWUNG OPEN THE DOOR... AND SCREAMED



E-E-E-E-E-E

*SEVEN BODIES?* SEVEN BODIES OF WOMEN, IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DECAY, THEIR THROATS SLIT, LAY BEFORE HER IN THAT HORRIBLE LITTLE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL...

SHE'D RUN, CRYING, FROM THE BOTT SIGHT. AND THEN SHE'D THOUGHT OF THE BOTTLE OF BLACK OIL IN THE BATHROOM...



LAURA STOOD UPON THE COFFEE TABLE BEFORE THE PORTRAIT, INHALING THE FUMES FROM THE TURPENTINE IN HER HAND...

THE COLOR OF THE BEARD? SO FRESH. SO CLEAN. SO UNWETTERED WITH AGE. THAT'S WHAT BOTHERED ME!



SHAKELY, LAURA SWEARED THE TURPENTINE-SOAKED WRAP OF COTTON ACROSS THE PORTRAIT, REMOVED THE WHITE OF THE BEARD AWAY, DISSOLVING IT, REVEALING THE TRUE COLOR BENEATH...



SHE RAN AROUND. SILBERT STOOD THERE, GRIMACING THE TRUE COLOR OF HIS BEARD, FOR, HAD BEEN REACHED. THE RAZOR GLEISTED IN HIS HAND.

YES, LAURA. BARON BELLE DE RAYS WAS THE ORIGINAL BLUEBEARD? AND I-AM, ER - AM CARRYING ON THE FAMILY TRADITION.

SHORE



AND SO, OUR TARTY TIGER ENDS FIEDER, IN A HEE, HEE... CUTTING CLIMAX. AND LIKE HER SEVEN PREDECESSORS, LAURA, TOOKLEND UP IN THE LITTLE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL ON THE TOP FLOOR AS FOR SILBERT, THE MODERN-DAY BLUEBEARD, HE'S TRAVELING AROUND THE COUNTRY AGAIN, LOOKING FOR NUMBER NINE FOR HIS COLLECTION SO... IF A GUY WITH A 3 O'CLOCK SOME SHADOW PROPOSES, GIRLS, BEWARE!

HE'S OUT FOR WHAT HE CAN GET? AND NOW... HE AWAIT'S IT ALL ONE LATER... 'TIL



-THE END-

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, WELL! NOW THAT THE OLD MAN HAS BORED YOU WITH HER GIBBET-SOBBAN-SOOPINGS, IT'S TIME FOR A REAL TERROR TALE. SO DINEP INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR, CRUMBS, AND YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE CRYPT-KEEPER WILL GURGLE YOUR BLOOD AND SHIVER YOUR SPINE WITH ANOTHER CHILLER-BILLER FROM MY HOLST COLLECTION. I CALL THIS SCREE ADVENTURE INTO THE HAUSBEATING...

**DIG THAT CAT...  
HE'S REAL GONE!**

ULAND, THE DROPPING, BOWED STIFFLY TO THE CHEERING CROWD, AND STEPPED GINGERLY INTO THE SAWN-LINED CASSET THAT RESTED, SUSPENDED, OVER THE YAWNING TEN-FOOT-DEEP PIT. A HUSH FELL OVER THE GATHERING OF THE CURIOUS THAT HAD COME TO WITNESS ULAND'S LATEST SCRAP-UP WITH DEATH. A VOICE BOOMED OVER A LOUDSPEAKER.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ULAND, THE DROPPING, IS GETTING INTO THE COFFIN NOW. IN A MOMENT, ITS LID WILL BE SEALED AND IT WILL BE LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE...



ULAND RECLINED IN THE COFFIN, THE LID WAS CLOSED, AND THE COFFIN WAS LOWERED INTO THE YAWNING EXCAVATION. THE VOICE COMING OVER THE P. A. SYSTEM RASPED ON, DESCRIBING THE ACTION FOR THOSE WHO COULD NOT SEE.

THE GRAVE DIGGERS ARE SHUFFLING FORWARD, FOLKS. THEY'RE SHOVELING THE EARTH BACK INTO THE GRAVE...COVERING THE COFFIN...



LYING IN THE DARIQUES, AMONG THE SATIN FOLDS THAT SURROUNDED HIM, **GLAND, THE ANKHOV** LAUGHED AS HE LISTENED TO THE VOICE FAR ABOVE HIM AND THE BOOMING SOUND OF THE EARTH STRIKING THE COFFIN—**LO...**

...EXPERTS CALCULATE THAT A MAN SEALED INTO THAT COFFIN WOULD SUFFOCATE WITHIN AN **ANKHOV**, FOLKS. **LUKIC** WILL REMAIN BURIED FOR **THREE** **ANKHOV**...

HEH, HEH... AND WHEN THEY DID ME UP, THEY WILL EXAMINE ME, AND PRO-  
NOUNCE ME **DEAD**...

...BUT I WILL **LIVE AGAIN**... RETURN FROM THE **DEAD AGAIN** AS I HAVE RETURNED FROM THE **DEAD BEFORE**. AND **THIS**... THIS WILL BE MY **FAREWELL PERFORM-  
MANCE**. THIS WILL BE THE **LAST** TIME I WILL RETURN. IT IS THE **LAST** TIME I CAN RETURN...



'I REMEMBER HOW IT ALL BEGAN. HOW HE STOOD OVER ME AS I LAY SPARK IN A DORMITORY OR BED ROOM, A DERELICT... A DOWN-AND-OUTER...

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS...

'...HOW HE BENT CLOSE TO ME... WHISPERING...'

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE **ANKHOV** RATHER THAN YOU **EVER DREAMED**...

'EMAN, **SCRAM**. LET'S BE. LET'S BE...

'...HOW HE FED ME COFFEE UNTIL HE SCORCHED ME UP... THEN TOLD ME HIS **WILD STORY**...

MY NAME IS **DOCTOR EMIL MANFRED**. I AM READY TO **ASTOUND** THE **WORLD** WITH MY **DISCOVERY**... THE **DISCOVERY** THAT WILL MAKE US **BOTH** **ANKHOV**...

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT, **DOCT**...

I HAVE DISCOVERED HOW TO **CREATE** **DEATH**, MY FRIEND... HOW TO **DIE**... AND THEN TO **LIVE AGAIN**... NOT JUST **ONCE**, BUT **MANY TIMES**!

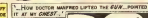
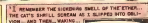
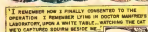
**DIE... AND LIVE AGAIN?** I DON'T GET IT!

YOU HAVE HEARD OF THE **SUPERSTITION** REGARDING THE **COMMON ALLEY CAT**? THE **SUPERSTITION** THAT A **CAT HAS NINE LIVES**? WELL, I HAVE **DISCOVERED** THE **CAT'S SECRET**, MY FRIEND.

WHAT? YOU' MEAN...







'I REMEMBER THE EXPLOSION...THE  
SEARING PAIN AS THE BULLET  
ENTERED MY CHEST...TORN INTO MY  
HEART...'



'I REMEMBER THE BLACKNESS  
CLOSING IN AROUND ME...AND THEN  
LIFTING...'



ULRIC, THE UNDYING!  
THAT'S WHAT WE WILL  
CALL YOU! YOU WERE  
KILLED BY THAT  
BULLET, ULRIC! BUT  
NOW YOU HAVE  
RETURNED...TO  
START ANOTHER  
LIFE!

THEN ONE  
OF THE  
LIVERS WAS  
USED UP!



EXACTLY! BUT WE WILL  
WASTE NO MORE. FROM  
NOW ON, WE WILL MAKE  
EACH OF YOUR LIVES  
PAY...AND PAY WELL!

ULRIC, THE  
UNDYING! I  
LIVE IT! WHEN  
DO WE START...



'I REMEMBER THE FIRST SPECTACLE. I'D ANNOUNCED THAT I  
WOULD GO OVER NIAGARA FALLS...WITHOUT A BARREL...AND  
LIVE. I REMEMBER THE RUSHING NIAGARA RIVER, SWEEPING  
PAST THE CRONIN THAT LINED THE SHORE...SWEEPING ME TO THE  
BRINK AND OVER...'



'I REMEMBER THE MONTHS I SPENT RECOVERING ...  
WAITING FOR BONES TO MEND...'

LISTEN TO THIS, DOC. ULRIC  
DEFIED CERTAIN DEATH.  
SWIM OVER FALLS AND  
LIVED! EARNED THIRTY  
THOUSAND DOLLARS IN  
WAGERS AND ADMIRATIONS!

WHAT THEY DON'T  
KNOW, ULRIC, IS THAT  
YOU DID DIE! THIS  
IS ANOTHER LIFE  
YOU ARE LIVING...  
YOUR THIRD. YOU  
HAVE USED TWO!



'I REMEMBER MY SECOND SPECTACLE. I'D ANNOUNCED I  
WOULD LEAP FROM A PLANE FLYING AT TWO THOUSAND  
FEET...WITHOUT A PARACHUTE. AND LIVE. I  
REMEMBER STEPPING INTO SPACE OVER THE FIELD WHERE  
THE CRONIN HAD BATHED...'



"MORE MONTHS, WAITING FOR BROKEN BONES TO KNEAD, TORN FLESH TO HEAL..."

"HOW MUCH DID WE MAKE THIS TIME, DOC?"

"ALL TOLD... FIFTY-SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS! -HENCE FOUR THOUSAND TWENTY-EIGHT GRAND..."



"I'D TAKEN A BLIND IN MY CHEST, I'D GONE OVER NIAGARA FALLS, AND I'D LEAPED FROM A PLANE FOR A TOTAL OF EIGHTY-TO GRAND. I'D USED UP THREE OF MY NINE LIVES. I'D SUFFERED THE FEAR AND THE PAIN. BUT THE DOC, WHO ONLY WATCHED, TOOK HALF THE DOUGH. SO I MADE UP MY MIND..."

"ULRICK! SLOW DOWN! YOU'RE DRIVING TOO FAST!"

"I'M GOING TO MAKE AN INVESTMENT, DOC! I'M GOING TO INVEST MY FOURTH LIFE FOR HOO'LEP'S GUN PARTNERSHIP! I'LL STILL HAVE FIVE LIVES LEFT!"



"I REMEMBER THE DOC'S FACE AS I DROVE THE CAR OFF THE CLIFF...THE HORROR UPON IT...AND THEN, AS WE HIT, THE SUDDEN SMILE THAT SPREAD ACROSS IT..."



"DOC DIED INSTANTLY. I REVIVED. I WAS NOW IN MY FIFTH LIFE. BUT I COULDN'T FORGET THAT SMILE. I COULDN'T GET IT OUT OF MY MIND. AFTER I'D BEEN DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL, I INQUIRED TO THE NEWSPAPER..."

"I WILL ALLOW MYSELF TO BE TIED UP IN A BAG, WEIGHTED DOWN, AND DROPPED INTO THE RIVER FOR SIX MONTHS. I AM WILLING TO TAKE ALL BETS THAT IT WILL NOT KILL ME..."



"MY FIFTH LIFE LEFT ME IN THE FORM OF TINY BUBBLES THAT ROSE UPWARD TO THE SURFACE AS I LAY IN THE MUD OF THE RIVER-BED... TIED IN A BURLAP BAG..."



"BEFORE MY NINTH SPECTACLE, DOC HAD TAKEN CARE OF MY REVENUES. MY RETURNINGS. WHEN THEY CALLED ME UP AND EXAMINED ME..."



"HE'S DEAD!"

"SEND HIM TO THE MORGUE..."

"...DOC HADN'T AROUND TO TAKE MY 'CORPSE' AWAY. LUCKILY, I 'CAME TO' IN MY SIXTH LIFE JUST BEFORE THEY DRAINED THE BLOOD FROM MY BODY..."



"HEY?"

"WHAT THE...?"

"CHUCK..."

ULRIC, THE UPRISING, SMILED AS HE LAY AMONG THE SATIN FOLDS IN THE COFFIN, TEN FEET UNDER THE GROUND.

THAT'S WHEN DOC SMILED JUST AS HE DIED! HE THOUGHT THEY'D ENJOY HIM AND TO BE FINISHED...UNABLE TO RETURN! WELL, I WAS LUCKY...AND THE NEXT TIME, I MADE ARRANGEMENTS...

"THEN, I CONSTRUCTED A REPLIC OF THE ELECTRIC CHAIR...AND I ALLOWED THEM TO SHOOT THE SAME AMOUNT OF VOLTAGE THROUGH MY BODY THAT ALL CONVICTED KILLERS GET..."

READY,  
ULRIC?

READY!

"I HIRED AN ATTENDANT..."

AS SOON AS I'M DECLARED DEAD, BRING MY BOSS BACK HERE AND PUT IT IN BED. I'LL COME AROUND AFTER A WHILE. UNDERSTAND, SEXTON?

YES, MR.  
ULRIC?

"AND I REVIVED, IN MY SEVENTH LIFE, NINETEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS RICHER..."

HERE'S YOUR MONEY,  
ULRIC, FROM NEWBEEZ...  
AND FIVE FIFTEENS...AND  
ADMISSIONS...AND  
YOUR SIDE BETS...

THANK  
YOU!

"AS I SAT ON MY BED COUNTING MY LATEST BANKROLL, THE ATTENDANT I'D HIRED CAME IN WITH A SMILE IN HIS HAND..."

GIVE ME THAT  
MONEY, MR.  
ULRIC...

DON'T BE A  
FOOL,  
SEXTON!

"BUT I WAS THE FOOL! I SURPRISED WITH HIM! THAT WAS A MISTAKE! I WASTED MY SEVENTH LIFE. SEXTON BROUGHT THE KNIFE DOWN INTO MY HEART..."

GGGGHHHHH...

ULRIC, THE GHOVING SULKED AT THE LAST TRACE OF GYSEN IN THE BURIED COFFIN...

SO THIS IS THE LAST TIME I CAN DIE AND...  
GASP... EXPECT TO RETURN! THIS IS MY EIGHTH LIFE... GASP! WHEN I REVIVE... GASP... I WILL BE IN MY NINTH LIFE! MY LAST LIFE! WITH FINAL AND... ETERNAL DEATH AT ITS END...

GASP! BUT...



...BUT I'M ALIVE, NOW... THANKS TO THAT POOR CAT...  
THAT POOR CAT LYING DEAD ON THE FABLE NEXT TO ME!



ULRIC SHOOK, HIS HEAD FEELING...

...THAT POOR CAT THAT DIED SO  
THAT I COULD HAVE ITS NINE...  
NINE... OH, MY LORD!



ULRIC, THE GHOVING, SCREAMED

THAT CAT? IT WAS DANCE? I  
ONLY GOT EIGHT LIVES FROM IT!  
ONLY EIGHT! NO! NO!  
LET ME OUT  
OF HERE!



...AS THE LAST TRACE OF GYSEN  
VANISHED FROM THE COFFIN BURIED  
SO DEEP...

THAT'S... CHUCK... WHY... THE...  
GASP... COUGH... DOC... LAUGHED!

EEE AAAGGHHHH!



UP ABOVE, THE LOUSEPETER ORDERED ON...

WE'VE BEEN DOWN THERE  
OVER AN HOUR, POLKS. HIS  
COFFIN IS GONE BY NOW...

HER, ED? DID... DID  
YOU HEAR SOMETHING?  
A FAINT SCREAM?

HUH?  
AW! MUSTA  
BEEN A  
CAT YOU  
HEARD,  
FELL...

UNO FINI!



HER, HER, AND THAT'S MY KEEF-FARK-FRIENDS.  
ULRIC COUNTED HIS NINE LIVES VERY CARE-  
FULLY. TROUBLE WAS, HE ONLY HAD EIGHT TO  
PLAY WITH, POOR PUSSY USED UP ONE. WHEN  
THEY DUG UP ULRIC AT THE END OF THE THREE  
HOURS, HE WAS DEAD, ALL RIGHT. FOR GOOD,  
POSSY! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE OLD

BITCH FOR MORE  
MEOWS, AND  
LISTEN! HERE'S  
A TIP! MAKE LIKE  
YOUNG BEADING  
HER COLUMB, IF  
YOU DON'T... HER,  
HER... YOU MAY  
ANOTHER! 'BYE...



-THE END-

**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST  
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION  
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THESE SEALS  
WHEN YOU BUY!**

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**OUT OF SIGHT!**



Ransom crouched in the weeds bordering the lake, watching with fear as the three men came running across the sweeping lawn. Probably the chauffeur, the caretaker and the handyman, Ransom thought uneasily. It was obvious, even at this distance, that they were armed; the tall man had a shotgun, the other two carried revolvers. His best chance to get out of sight was to skirt the lake, Ransom realized. Clinging to the protection of the water-edge foliage he might be able to slip into the woods on the other side. His fist tightened unconsciously around the necklace Ransom had just stolen from the estate house. Then he began to move, trying not to disturb the weeds . . . to merge with the greenery edging the lake.

A few yards further on, Ransom saw two large birds floating placidly, their sharp-beaked heads turned toward him. Swans, Ransom thought . . . biggest I've ever seen. Mean eyes, too. Don't like the way they're watching me. Coming this way now!

Ransom stood silent a moment, warily watching the big birds circle slowly, barely rippling the water as they moved closer. He remembered hearing about the ferocity swans were capable of . . . when aroused, he recalled, they displayed the savagery of wild animals. Those wings were incredibly powerful . . . and their beaks were supposed to have the deadly sharpness of swords . . .

A crash in the underbrush startled Ransom. Sucking his breath into his

lungs, he plunged on through the weeds. *They're just a couple of harmless birds*, he assured himself. *They won't keep ME from getting to the other side of the lake!*

They were uncomfortably close now, their beady eyes riveted on him. With a gasp of anger Ransom picked up a large stone and hurled it... heard it thwunk against one of the birds. Now they'd get out of his way... give him clear passage...

In the next instant they were on him, their horrible hissing loud in his ears. He raised an arm to ward off the attack, felt a numbing shock all the way to his shoulder as a ponderous wing slashed at him. With a cry of pain he realized that the arm was paralyzed. Possibly a bone broken in that furious attack... or a nerve damaged...

He slipped and went down in a cascade of frothing water. When Ransom rose to the surface, gasping for breath, all he could see was a whirl of heavy white feathers and beady, hate-filled eyes. And the long, razor-sharp beaks aimed at his head!

Then an excruciating pain turned everything blood-red before him. His face seemed a raw, open wound... his nose, his mouth and eyes seemed aflame with agony. He tried to raise an arm to defend himself, but the stabbing at his face was making him scream like a madman. He felt himself sliding back into the water, his body shaking with fiery spasms as if every nerve was exposed... vulnerable...

And he was aware of one other thing... he couldn't see! Those savage swans... their needle-like beaks were being driven with demonic fury, again and again, into his eyes! Or what was left of them! And Ransom was completely at their mercy...



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# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

**Hammmph! V.K. got HIS! Now I'm gettin' MINE!** When my mercenary idiot editors get hold of somethin', they NEVER let go! So all back and suffer through ... if you haven't already ... the announcement of their latest insidious money-grabbing scheme ... namely, the formation of a national E.C. fan organization. O.K., knockin' noggins ... crack open the patch! —O.W.

Thanks ever so much, old girl, for the charming introduction to our happy news. But before launching into the sordid details of the club, we would like to sketch in a little background. We started out with two conditions that positively had to be met:

1) Our club would have to be a different kind of fan club ... a consciously active club that would provide long-range interest, enjoyment and benefits for its members! And ...

2) Our club would have to be a non-profit fan club! Incredible as it may seem, the only income we at E.C. derive ... or care to derive! ... from our efforts comes from the newsstand sales of our 10c mags. We actually lose a little on subscriptions, and make very little on the annuals ... both are primarily offered as services to promote good will! If you readers want a fan club, we're more than happy to oblige ... but, again, as a service, not for profit!

So here's what we've come up with ...

1) **THE NAME:** As one reader wrote a while back, "E.C. magazines are habit-forming." So what could be more logical than to call the organization, "THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB"?

2) **THE SET-UP:** The E.C. Fan-Addict Club will consist of the national "parent" organization, and local chapters. Everyone who joins will be a member of the national organization. In addition, any group of five or more prospective members may join as an authorized chapter of the national organization. Each such chapter will be assigned a charter number. The name and address of the elected president of each authorized chapter will be made available to all members, so that those who are not already a member of a chapter will be able to join the one nearest them if they wish to.

3) **WHAT YOU GET:** Each member will receive a full-color 7½ by 10½ membership certificate, suitable for framing; a wallet-size

membership identification card; a striking membership patch for sweaters, jackets, etc.; and a very distinguished-looking membership pin!

4) **COST OF JOINING.** Membership in THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB will set you back two bits ... 25¢! This 25¢ represents the exact cost to us (plus or minus a fraction of a cent!) of one envelope, one stamp, and the above mentioned four items ... certificate, card, patch, and pin! (The cost of Ruby's and Nancy's loving labor in packing and mailing is lovingly donated by E.C.)

5) **POSSIBLE FUTURE PLANS:** We are considering publishing an E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB BULLETIN, containing such features as national and local chapter news; advance inside information on new titles, future stories, and special issues, etc.; articles and stories submitted by members; and a "back-issue trading post!" Only club members would be eligible to subscribe, with the price and frequency of publication yet to be decided upon.

We are also considering some sort of "E.C. Surprise-of-the-Month" plan for members. What the surprises might be, and what we might have to clip you for THIS one, is also as yet undetermined.

6) **IF YOU'RE STILL INTERESTED:** For an individual membership, send 25¢, along with your clearly printed name and address, to:

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
Room 706  
215 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

If five or more of you wish to join as an authorized chapter, enclose each member's name and address, along with 25¢ for each name, and indicate the name of the elected president. We will notify each president of his chapter's charter number ... but each chapter member will receive his membership credentials, etc., individually.

So that's it! Meet new friends. Make new enemies. See the world. Spend money. Join THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!!!

(In honor of the occasion, we will forego the usual subscription plug that 6 issues of this, or any other E.C. mag, cost 75¢ —ed.)



HERE'S A HORROR YARN THAT'S A

# CORKER!



THE MAN AND THE WOMAN STOOD UPON THE STOOP OF THE OLD BROWNSTONE HOUSE BEFORE THE HUGE GLASS FRONT DOOR WITH ITS INTRICATE BLACK WROUGHT-IRON GRILL WORK. THE WOMAN LIFTED A NERVOUS FINGER TOWARD THE BELL. THE MAN CAUGHT HER HAND IN A FINAL PLEA.

FOR GOD'S SAKE, JANET, FORGET THIS INSANE IDEA ABOUT EVIL SPIRITS AND WITCHDRAFT AND THE DOCTOR. NO PHONY SWAMI CAN HELP YOU. COME BACK TO THE OFFICE... WITH ME.

NO, PETER. YOU'VE HAD YOUR CHANCE. WE'VE GOTTEN NOWHERE WITH PSYCHIATRY. YOU'VE PROVED INTO MY PAST AND MY SUBCONSCIOUS AND JED HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO HELP ME. THE SWAMI IS MY ONLY CHANCE, NOW.



THE MAN LOOKED INTO THE WOMAN'S EYES.

DARLING, THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN HELP YOU IS YOURSELF. ONCE YOU REALIZE THAT I LOVE YOU AND THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO BE ASHAMED OF, YOU WON'T WANT TO DO... TO DO WHAT YOU'VE TRIED TO DO SO MANY TIMES...

WE'VE BEEN ALL THROUGH THIS, PETER. PLEASE! LET ME GO...



THE WOMAN PRESSED THE BELL. FOOTSTEPS RANGED WITHIN. A FIGURE IN AN EMERGENCY SATIN ROBE WEARING A SILVER-VEILED TURBAN PEERED THROUGH THE IRON-DRILLED DOOR... SWUNG IT OPEN...

PETER: WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER ME, SWAMI. MY NAME IS JANET BALK. THIS IS MY FIANCE, DOCTOR PETER RAYMOND. I USED TO ATTEND YOUR SEANCES... YEARS AGO.



THE SWAMI STUDIED THE WOMAN, THEN SMILED...

AM, YES? MISS GALT?  
OF COURSE I REMEMBER  
YOU. YOU WERE, HOW  
SHALL I SAY IT, A  
DOUBTER... AM  
UNBELIEVER... A  
DREPTIC.

I WAS  
SKEPTI-  
CAL,  
SWAMI,  
YES? BUT  
NOW I NEED  
YOUR HELP...



THE WOMAN BEGAN TO WEEP...

I... BOB... I  
HAVE HAD  
ELSE TO GO.  
NO ONE ELSE  
DOES TO  
TURN TO

MISS GALT IS  
EMOTIONALLY  
UNSETTLED. MISS  
GALT,  
I THINK IT  
WOULD BE  
BEST IF I  
TOOK HER

COME  
DOWNSTAIRS  
WITH ME.  
DOCTOR  
DOES  
NOT



THE SWAMI LED THE SOBBING WOMAN  
AND THE DOCTOR INTO A DIMLY LIT  
ROOM AND BIG THEM SEAT THEM-  
SELVES, HE STOOD OVER THEM...

NOW WHAT  
SEEMS TO BE  
THE TROUBLE?

P... IT BEGAN  
ABOUT SIX  
MONTHS AGO.  
BEFORE THEN, I  
WAS SERIOUS-  
MINDED, INTENSE,  
IN LOVE WITH PETER.  
AN EMOTIONALLY  
STABLE PERSON.



"PETER AND I HAD MET IN COLLEGE. HE'D BEEN TAKING  
A POST GRADUATE COURSE IN PSYCHIATRY, AND I'D BEEN  
MAJORING IN JOURNALISM. WE FELL IN LOVE...

...AND WHEN I GOT A  
PRACTICE STARTING, WE  
CAN BE MARRIED AND  
SETTLE DOWN IN A  
FLAGE OF OUR OWN,  
AND HAVE KIDS.

...AND I COULD WORK  
UNTIL THEN, AND WE'D  
HAVE SOME MONEY  
SAVED. OH, DARLING...  
IT'S GOING TO BE SO  
WONDERFUL...



THEN, AS I SAID, ABOUT SIX MONTHS AGO SOMETHING  
HAPPENED TO ME. I SUDDENLY FELT TIRED, COMED, BORED,  
HAPE. I SUDDENLY WANTED PLEASURE, EXCITEMENT,  
STIMULATION...

BUT THE CONCERT,  
JANET? I HAVE  
TICKETS!

FORGET THE CONCERT, PETER.  
LET'S GO SOMEPLACE THRILLING  
TONIGHT. LET'S GO TO A  
NIGHT CLUB...



AFTER I'D GRADUATED, I'D GOTTEN A JOB ON A  
NEWSPAPER. PETER, MEANWHILE, CONTINUED WORKING  
TOWARD HIS DREAM. WE SAW EACH OTHER OFTEN...

JUST THINK, BABY, IN ANOTHER  
YEAR, I GET MY DOCTORATE.  
BUY MYSELF A GOOD... AND I'M  
IN BUSINESS.

AND MAYBE, WITH  
A LITTLE LUCK,  
WE CAN BE  
MARRIED SOON...



I'D ALWAYS BEEN THE INTELLECTUAL TYPE. THAT'S  
WHY I'D COME TO YOUR SERVICES. FOR PURELY INTEL-  
LECTUAL REASONS, I'D ALWAYS LOVED MORE ART...  
LITERATURE. BUT SUDDENLY, I REJECTED THOSE THINGS.  
I REJECTED EVERYTHING GOOD. I SAVED OUT EVIL...

KISS ME,  
DARLING...

JANET? WHAT'S COME  
OVER YOU LATELY...



PETER INTERRUPTED JANET'S STORY...

SHE, SHE WAS LIKE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSON. SHE WAS SUDDENLY INTERESTED ONLY IN PLEASURE... GOOD-TIMES... WITNESS, I TRIED TO TALK TO HER...



...AND THEN JUST LIKE THAT ONE MORNING, I WOKED UP TIRED AND SAD AND SOBER AND MOROSE AND I DON'T WANT ANY MORE GOOD-TIMES. I WANTED TO DIE...

PETER...SOL...CAN YOU COME OVER QUICKLY? I'M...I'M SICK!  
I...I...MURDER PLEASE...



PETER SPEAK AGAIN...

WHEN I GOT TO JANET'S PLACE, I FOUND HER STANDING IN THE KITCHEN WITH A KNIFE IN HER HANDS...



I WAS GOING TO KILL MYSELF, SWAM. I WANTED TO SLIT MY THROAT. IF IT WEREN FOR PETER, I'D...ID...

JANET PUT HER HEAD IN HER HANDS. PETER CONTINUED...

SHE'S ATTEMPTED TO KILL HERSELF SEVERAL TIMES SINCE THEN. I'VE TRIED TO HELP HER BUT SHE REFUSED TO BE HELPED. I'VE EVEN TRIED PSYCHO-THERAPY...TO GET AT THE BASIC CAUSE OF THIS COMPULSION FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION...



IT ISN'T IN MY MIND, SWAM. I KNOW IT. THERE'S SOMETHING INSIDE OF ME...FORCING ME TO TRY TO DESTROY MYSELF. THAT'S WHY I'VE COME TO YOU!

SHE TALKS WILDLY. SHE TALKS OF DEMONS AND WITCHERY AND NOW-SENSE LIKE THAT!



IT ISN'T! I'M NOW-SENSE, WITCHERY, DOCTOR SWAMI, RAYMOND! I KNOW IT!

THERE'S A FORCE INSIDE OF ME. IT KEEPS TELLING ME, 'KILL YOURSELF. DESTROY YOURSELF.' SOL, SOL...

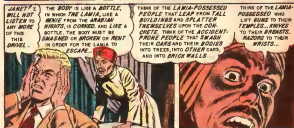


YOUR FEAR IS POSSESSED BY A LAMA, DOCTOR RAYMOND...

A...A WHAT?



A LAMA...AN EVIL SPIRIT...AN ESSENCE OF POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION...A SUPER-NATURAL MALPESCENT...IN OTHER WORDS, A DEVIL...



PETER SNATCHED JANET'S HAND, PULLING HER FROM THE ROOM...

HAI! THERE! YOU SEE! PETER! IT WILL BE COSTLY! THAT'S ALL HE'S INTERESTED IN! MONEY! YOU'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!



THE SWAMI CALLED AFTER JANET...

SIX MONTHS AGO, MISS DAIY THIRU! WHAT VIOLENT DEATH DID YOU WITNESS SIX MONTHS AGO? WHEN COULD THE LAMIA HAVE ENTERED YOUR BODY? WHAT DID YOU FEEL? WHAT DEATH WERE YOU READY?



PETER HESITATED... THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE. JANET GAINED...

OF COURSE! I WAS A HANF-SENT UPSTATE, TO THE PRISON... TO COVER A HANF-... FOR THE PAPER!



YOU SEE, A HANFING DOESN'T 'AUPHON' THE BODY. DOESN'T 'OPEN' A 'DOOR' FOR THE LAMIA TO ESCAPE...



THIS... CHORE... THIS HANFING DID! THE CONNECTED KILLER WAS A HUGE MAN... OVERWEIGHT...



...WHEN THE TRAP SPRUNG, HIS BODY PLUMGED DOWNWARD, AND THE ROPE... TORE HIS HEAD OFF.



THE SWAMI TURNED WHITE...

A... A DECAPITATION LAMIA.



NO! OH, LORD...

JANET! FOR GOD'S SAKE... STOP THIS AND COME...

THE SWAMI SHOOK...

DOCTOR RAYMOND! THIS IS SERIOUS! THE DECAPITATION LAMIA IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMOVE. IT WILL ONLY EXIT THROUGH THE 'WICK' OF THE BOTTLE'... BY UNCOVERING IT!



JANET! COME BACK!



JANET SWUNG OPEN THE HUGE GULLY DOOR AND STUMBLED DOWN THE STEPS OF THE OLD BROWN-STONE HOUSE...



JANET?

PETER TORE AFTER HER AS SHE RAN WILDLY UP THE BLOCK...



BLASTED SWAMI FILLING HER SUCK MIND WITH SUCH ROT

THE SUBWAY KIOSK LOOMED UP BEFORE THE WIDE-EYED TERRORIZED WOMAN...



JANET? NOT STOP HER? SOMEONE...

SHE DARTED DOWN THE STEPS... INTO THE HOWLING DARKNESS... PETER CLOSE BEHIND HER...



JANET? COME BACK!  
NO! NO!

THE STATION WAS ALMOST DESERTED, LIGHTS SWEEP DOWN THE GLEAMING STEEL RAILS... INTO THE EMPTY STATION... A TRAIN WAS COMING. JANET FLAILED AT THE PLATFORM EDGE. HER SCREAM ECHOED OFF TILED WALLS AS SHE FELL...



PETER WATCHED, HORRIFIED, AS THE KNIFE-LIKE WHEELS OF THE SUBWAY TRAIN PASSED OVER JANET'S NECK, SEVERING HER HEAD FROM HER BODY...



OH -  
GOD...

...LIKE AN UNDOORING... LIKE AN OPENING OF A BOTTLE OF BUR-  
GUNDY... THE RED WINE FOUNTAINING... AND THEN THE BEST RIDING... AND COMING TOWARD PETER...



JANET? MY... SON...  
MY JANET...

...AND THEN THE SUDDEN STRANGE FEELING DEEP INSIDE PETER. THE SLEEPYNESS AND DELIGHT... BUBBLING OUT INTO LAUGHTER...



...AND THE BEGINNING OF AN IDETTED EVIL ENJOYMENT THAT WOULD ONLY END IN BOREDOM AND THE JAWCRACKING ONCE AGAIN...

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOUR PUTRID POSSIES AGAIN, CREEPS, PEERING INTO THE VAULT. WELL, YOUR HAPPY HOST IN HOWLS, THE VAULT-KEEPER (THAT'S ME, IN THE LIVED FLESH) IS READY TO RELATE ANOTHER REVOLTING TALE FROM MY APPETIZING ASSORTMENT. SO, COME IN,, CURL UP ON THAT DISSECTION TABLE THERE, AND I'LL BEGIN THE SCREAM-STORY I CALL...

## The HIGH COST of DYING!

OUR STORY BEGINS IN PARIS ON A SWELTERING SUMMER NIGHT IN 1907. A CART RATTLES THROUGH DESERTED COBBLE-STONED STREETS...PAST DARKENED STORES AND SHUTTERED HOUSES...DOWN WINDING ALLEYS ALIVE WITH SCAMPING GREY SHADOWS. AND FINALLY UP ONTO ONE OF THE COUNTLESS BRIDGES THAT SPAN THE RIVER SEINE. THE SHABBY DRESSED FIGURE, PULLING THE HOISTY CART, GASPS AND STRAINS AS HE LABORS UP THE INCLINE OF THE BRIDGE TOWARD ITS CENTER. HIS TORN AND SHREDDED SHIRT IS WET WITH PERSPIRATION, AND HIS GRAY FACE IS STREAKED BY THE TEARS THAT FILL HIS EYES AND OVERFLOW THEIR LIDS...



# CRAWFALL

HIS NAME IS HENRY COURRET. HE STOPS NOW, RESTING... WIPING HIS WET EYES WITH THE BACK OF HIS HUGE HAND. HE TURNS AND GLANCES BEHIND HIM...AT THE CART... AT THE BODY LYING UPON IT, WRAPPED IN SURLAR, LYING STILL AND SILENT AND NEVERMORE TO MOVE OR LAUGH OR TALK OR CRY, AS NOW HENRY IS CRYING...



FOR A WHILE, HENRI STARES DOWN AT THE MURRY FOX-BLANKETED RIVER, SHAKING HIS HEAD, HATING HIMSELF FOR THIS...THIS HORRIBLE THING THAT HE IS DOING...

BUT SOMETIMES A MAN IS FORCED TO DO THINGS THAT ARE HATEFUL AND REVOLTING TO HIM. SOMETIMES, HE CANNOT HELP HIMSELF. HENRI STARES DOWN AT THE SLOW MURRY RIVER AND WEES...



THE RIVER BELOW THE BRIDGE FLOWS ON... LIKE TIME SEASLESSLY, UNENDING... NEVER COMING BACK, COMING DOWNSTREAM INTO THE PAST... LOST FOREVER. HENRI BAKES DOWNSTREAM INTO THE PAST... INTO THE PAST... AND HE SEES HIMSELF MAKING THAT MORNING TO THE CHILDREN'S HYSTERICAL CRIES...

HENRI SEES IT ALL SO CLEARLY... HIS HUNGRY CHILDREN, PALE AND THIN AND RANCHED... SCORING...



AND HE REMEMBERS HOW HE HAD LEAPED FROM HIS STRAW COT AND RUSHED TO HIS WIFE'S SIDE... TO SUZETTE... BEAUTIFUL, SILENT SUZETTE...

HE REMEMBERS BEHIND THE BOY, FIERCE...

HE REMEMBERS DOCTOR LE GIGANT COMING TO THE SQUALID CELLAR-APARTMENT AND PUTTING DOWN HIS LITTLE BLACK BAG AND TAKING SUZETTE'S LIMP WHITE HAND IN HIS AND BEARING HER HEAD...



HURRY! CHILD! RUN TO M'SIEUR LE GIGANT! THE DOCTOR. BRING HIM HERE! HURRY!

YES, PAPA!





HENRI REMEMBERS DOCTOR LE  
DUSHT LOOKING AT HIM.

COULDN'T YOU  
AFFORD TO BUY  
FOOD, COURBET?

WE, WE HAD NO  
MONEY! I, I  
HAVE NOT HAD  
WORK FOR SOME  
TIME...

SWEETIE, SHE  
SHE GAVE HER  
SHARE TO THE  
CHILDREN!

HEHE! A  
FIFTY WILL  
BETTER TAKE  
CARE OF THE  
FUNERAL RIGHT  
AWAY, COURBET!  
REMEMBER THE  
NEW ORDINANCE!

NEW ORDINANCE? THE COM-  
MISSIONER OF HEALTH'S  
LATEST DECREE.  
THERE ARE SO MANY  
THESE DAYS!  
ALL BODIES MUST  
BE BURIED WITHIN  
TWENTY-FOUR  
HOURS AFTER DEATH.  
YOU HAVE UNTIL  
TOMORROW MORNING.  
GOOD-BAY!

AND HENRI REMEMBERS GOING TO THE UNDERTAKER  
PARLOR AND INQUIRING...

WELL, LET US SEE. THERE  
IS THE PLOT... AND THE  
COFFIN... AND CANTHARE...

THE CHEAPEST  
I CAN MAKE IT IS  
FIFTY-FIVE  
FRANCS, M'SIEU  
COURBET!

ANYTHING  
BROUG,  
COURBET?

I... I DO NOT HAVE FIFTY-FIVE  
FRANCS NOW, M'SIEU BREYHARD. IF  
I COULD OWE IT TO YOU...

M'SIEU BREYHARD, THE UNDERTAKER, SHOOK HIS HEAD.

NO, NO! M'SIEU COURBET! I DO NOT DO  
BUSINESS THAT WAY. NO MONEY!  
NO FUNERAL! WHAT IF YOU NEVER  
PAID ME? WHAT COULD I DO? SO  
DIG UP THE BODY!

I WOULD  
PAY YOU!  
I SWEAR  
IT!

SORRY, M'SIEU! FIFTY-FIVE FRANCS  
IS THE PRICE! NO REMEMBER  
THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH'S  
DECREE. TWENTY-FOUR HOURS...

YES! YES!  
I WILL  
REMEMBER!

THE RIVER BELOW SWEEPS SLOWLY BY... AS THE PAST DAY'S EVENTS SWEEP SLOWLY BY, HENRI STARES INTO THE MURKY DEPTHS AND SEES HIS HOPELESS WAIN ATTEMPTS TO RAISE THE MONEY...

...FINALLY GOING BACK TO THE NOVEL THAT SERVED AS THEIR HOME, AND SEEING THE CHILDREN'S HUNGRY FACES AND HIS WIFE'S SILENT STILL BODY...



BUT YOU ARE MY LIFE-LONG FRIEND, LOUIS! MY WIFE IS DEAD. I MUST BURY HER...

I AM SORRY, HENRI. TIMES ARE BAD, JOBS ARE SCARCER. I HAVEN'T ENOUGH TO FEED MY OWN FAMILY... NO LESS BURY ONE OF YOURS...



WE... WE HAVE EATEN NOTHING ALL DAY, PAPA!

WE... WE'RE SO... HUNGRY, PAPA!

AND I... I HAVEN'T THE MONEY TO BURY YOUR POOR DEAD MAMA, NO LESS... CHORE... NO LESS FEED YOU...

...THE SUDDEN HEAVY KNOCKING ON THE FRONT DOOR...

...THE OFFICER, LOOMING IN THE DOORWAY, HIS EVIL EYES FLASHING... HIS GRIM MOUTH SMILING...

THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH HAS RECEIVED WORD FROM YOUR DOCTOR THAT YOUR WIFE PASSED AWAY THIS MORNING...

YES... THAT IS TRUE...



WHO... WHO'S THERE?

OPEN UP... IN THE NAME OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH...



YOU ARE HENRI COUNTRY...

YES? THAT IS ME...



IT IS MY DUTY TO INFORM YOU THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ORDINANCE 4886, IF THIS IS NOT PROPERLY BURIED BY A LICENSED UNDERTAKER BY TOMORROW MORNING, HER BODY WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PREMISES AND TURNED OVER TO THE PARIS CONSERVATORY OF MEDICINE...

THE... THE CONSERVATORY OF MEDICINE?

...FOR THE EDUCATION AND EXPERIMENTATION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS ENROLLED THERE. BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH, CITY OF PARIS, JULY 12, 1942.

NO! NO! OH, LORD...



THE OFFICER LOOKED AT HENRI.

HE SNEEZED.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT *THAT* MEANS, M'SIEU COUSIN BERT? IT MEANS THAT IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO *BURY* YOUR WIFE, HER *BODY* IS TURNED OVER TO *MEDICAL STUDENTS* FOR *DISSECTION*!

IT ISN'T *FAIR*! OH, GOD! IT ISN'T *FAIR*, THERE ISN'T ENOUGH *TIME*!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT *MEDICAL STUDENTS* DO TO *BODIES*, M'SIEU COUSIN? THEY TAKE *SHARP LITTLE SCALPELS*... AND THEY CUT THEM *OPEN* AND TAKE OUT THE *INSIDES* AND CUT THEM *OPEN*...

*POOR BY FORCE... KNOW BY KNOW... THEY PROBE AND SLICE AND CUT AND STUDY AND CUT SOME MORE.*



... AND DO YOU KNOW *WHY* THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH ISSUED THIS DECREE? *NOT* IN THE INTERESTS OF THE CITY'S *HEALTH*? HE GETS *SEVENTY-FIVE FRANGS* FOR EACH *BODY*... FROM THE *CONSERVATORY*... *WHICH HE POCKETS?*

*STOP IT! STOP IT! HAVE PITY!*

THE OFFICER LOOKED AROUND. HE LOOKED AT SUZETTE'S STILL WHITE FORM.

SHE IS *YOUNG* AND *PRETTY*. THE *MEDICAL STUDENTS* WILL *ESPECIALLY* WELCOME *HER* BODY SO I SUGGEST YOU *RAISE* THE *MONEY*, M'SIEU... *QUICKLY. BURY HER!*

I... *ENOUGH*... I *CAN'T*... *NOT*? I *HAVE* *TRIED*? I *CANNOT* EVEN *BUY* *FOOD* FOR THE *CHILDREN*!



THE OFFICER LOOKED AT THE *POVERTY* AND *SCALED* AT THE *PAIL*. THEN STARRING *CHILDREN* WHO STARED AT HIM WITH *WIDE FRIGHTENED EYES*.

THEN DON'T BE A *FOOL*, COUSIN! TAKE HER TO THE *CONSERVATORY YOURSELF. TONIGHT!* USE YOUR *OWN* *POCKETS* WITH THE *SEVENTY-FIVE FRANGS*! AT LEAST YOU WILL BE *ABLE* TO *FEED* YOUR *CHILDREN*!

*SHOWING WHAT THEY WILL DO TO SUZETTE. NOW, HOW CAN I?*

THE OFFICER TURNED TO GO. HE *SMUGGLED*.

*SHE IS DEAD, M'SIEU! SHE WILL NEVER KNOW! GOOD-EVENING! TILL TOMORROW... THEN...*

*TILL TOMORROW...*



HENRI STARES DOWN AT THE RIVER. HE THINKS OF THE MEDICAL STUDENTS, GATHERED AROUND THE BODY... THEIR SHINING SCALPES IN THEIR UPRIGHT HANDS... THEIR GRINNING FACES...



AND THEN HE LOOKS AT THE BODY WRAPPED IN BURLAP LYING ON THE OLD CART, AND HE KNOWS THAT WHAT HE IS DOING IS RIGHT.

AND THEN HE THINKS OF THE CHILDREN... MARIE AND PIERRE... THEIR BLOATED STOMACHS CRYING FOR FOOD... THEIR BONY FINGERS REACHING FOR CRUMBS IN THE FLOORBOARD CRACKS.



THE CART RUMBLES DOWN AND OFF THE BRIDGE. THE STIFF BODY BOUNCES UPON IT...



...RUMBLES ON THROUGH COBBLE-STONE STREETS, DOWN WINDING ALLEYS, TOWARD THE PARIS CONSERVATORY OF MEDICINE...

FOOTSTEPS APPROACH IN ANSWER TO HENRI'S FRANTIC KNOCK. THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. A FACE PEERS OUT.



THE DOOR SWINGS WIDE. A SHAFT OF LIGHT WHIPS INTO THE FOGGY SUMMER NIGHT, FALLING ACROSS THE BURLAP-WRAPPED FORM.



THE OLD MAN HOBBOLES OUT INTO THE NIGHT... OUT TO THE CART... LIFTS THE BURLAP COVER AND PEEPS AT THE STILL, WHITE FACE.



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, PAPA AND MAMA ATE HEARTILY, THE FIRST GOOD FOOD THEY'D HAD IN MONTHS.



"SLOWLY, CHILDREN? SLOWLY."

"YES, PAPA!"

AND THEY DRESSED IN THEIR NEW CLOTHES. THE CLOTHES HENRI HAD BOUGHT WITH PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIVE FRANCS.



"THIS IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DRESS IN THE WHOLE WORLD, PAPA!"

"AND THIS - THE HAND-SOMEST SUIT?"

"YES, CHILD - DEAR."

...AND, TOGETHER, THEY WALKED OUT INTO THE SUNLIGHT.



"IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY, PAPA!"

"MAMA ALWAYS LOVED BEAUTIFUL DAYS!"

"YES, CHILD - OPEN!"

AT EXACTLY THAT MOMENT, IN THE PARIS CONSERVATORY OF MEDICINE, EAGER CURIOUS PROSPECTIVE DOCTORS CUT AND SLICED AND PROBED THE NEW BODY THAT HAD ARRIVED THAT NIGHT.



AND LATER, JUST OUTSIDE PARIS, HENRI AND THE CHILDREN STOOD BEFORE THE DAPING OPEN GRAVE, WATCHING THE COFFIN BEING LOWERED SLOWLY INTO IT.



"MAMA ALWAYS SAID SHE WANTED TO BE BURIED ON A BEAUTIFUL DAY."

"GOOD-BYE, MAMA..."

"GOOD-BYE, SUZETTE..."

WHILE AT THAT PRECISE MOMENT, THE DEAN OF THE PARIS CONSERVATORY OF MEDICINE, ON HIS DAILY TOUR OF THE ANATOMY CLASSES, STOPPED BEFORE THE NEWLY PURCHASED BODY THAT NOW LAY COMPLETELY DISTRICTED...AND SHRILLED...



"WHY DIE? IT IS THE COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH!"

HEY, HEN! YEP! THAT'S MY YELP - FARK FIENST! HENRI TOOK A WALK THAT NIGHT TO TRY AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO... AND THE SOLUTION, SHALL WE SAY, DROPPED INTO HIS LAP OF COURSE, HE HAD TO GOAK THE COMMISSIONER TO DROP (DEAD, THAT IS) BY... WELL... I'LL SPARE YOU THE WORRY DETAILS. JUST USE YOUR LIL' OL' IMAGINATION. AND NOW IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE DOOR OF THE FAMILY TILL NEXT WE MEET. WHICH WILL BE IN THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S WAR-TALES FROM THE CRYPT. TELL THEM... AS THE UNDER-TAKER'S SAY: 'HAVE A NOCE MOURNING!'



THE END.



THE SHOW'S ON,  
GANG!

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- THRILLS YOU AND YOUR  
FRIENDS POP-STER!
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amazing new Television Bank! You  
wonder going will be bringing you this a  
look at this new money wonder!

**LIGHTS UP THE MINUTE YOU DROP  
COIN!** Just click a penny, nickel, dime  
or quarter into top slot. Instantly your  
grand new Television Bank lights up  
— a big, BIG way! In a split second,  
the screen leaps into sparkling life!

**AND WOW! WHAT A PICTURE!**  
Whether you go for "color" shows  
lighter and bluer or more a darker  
display in every corner, you've  
got them... and MORE! Right on the  
inside Television Bank! What a  
more, shining screen less over \$10.00!

gives you the brightest, clearest, pic-  
tures yet!

**TURN OF SWITCH SHOWS BEST BRIL-  
LIANT PICTURES!** When you're hooked  
your shining life in one picture just  
turn down knob, but keep knob pushed  
"down" lights goes and continues to  
be your money screen! To light one  
picture, push switch 20th. No less  
than SIX amazing pictures in all —  
a light dramatic dance scene, tennis  
racket scene, football scene, beach  
scene, and other scenes with  
no look dog!

**PUTS YOU "IN THE MONEY" — AND  
FAST! You savings plan on PLINY  
FAST! — and with the marvelous new  
Television Bank! None of your  
friends, relatives or other visitors  
can resist depositing enough to see the**

complete show! And with SIX won-  
derful pictures in one — you bank  
**REAL MONEY** just for looking them  
look!

**IT'S A MONEY — IN EVERY DETAIL!**  
You'll be the envy of all your friends  
with grand new Television Bank! A  
wonder model! It can make millions  
of the most expensive one. Complete  
even in the handsomely painted on  
speakers grille and dial. All metal  
ruggedly built bank, 4 1/2" x 4", has  
mean looking Bank Automatic  
silver light powered by efficient,  
rechargeable battery. **GUARANTEE  
TO DELIGHT YOU.** Bank comes  
complete with bulb, battery and every  
key for opening and enjoying the  
your wealth of savings.

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# MEN! WOMEN! take orders for famous HYLONS GUARANTEED 9 MOS.

ONLY YOUR  
SPARE  
TIME  
NEEDED

## Look At These Exceptional FIRST WEEK SPARE TIME EARNINGS

Some permit mentioning only these few exceptional cases, but they give you an idea of the BIG MONEY that is possible in just spare time starting the very first week.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Mr. Richard Peters, Fresno,<br>\$482.00 first week spare time   | Mrs. W. B. Price, St. Paul,<br>\$480.47 first week spare time  |
| Mrs. Virgil Williams, Texas,<br>\$376.87 first week spare time  | Mr. A. E. Lowman, Ga.,<br>\$355.28 first week spare time       |
| Mr. Henry O'Rourke, Vermont,<br>\$355.88 first week spare time  | Mrs. Emma Stearns, Wyo.,<br>\$345.88 first week spare time     |
| Mrs. J. A. Bayless, Ill.,<br>\$345.84 first week spare time     | Mr. J. Williams Jr., Ohio,<br>\$345.72 first week spare time   |
| Mr. Anthony Ayello, Wash.,<br>\$338.00 in 2 weeks spare time    | Mrs. John Corcoran, Conn.,<br>\$311.84 first week spare time   |
| Mrs. Agnes Michaels, Ind.,<br>\$304.26 in 2 weeks spare time    | Mr. W. Riley, Ill.,<br>\$278.72 first week spare time          |
| Mr. Russell F. Hart, New York<br>\$262.04 in 2 weeks spare time | Mrs. Frances Freeman, Texas,<br>\$262.72 first week spare time |

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Get national plans in a sure fire money maker! Successful distribution is guaranteed for the first four Hylons! Mrs. Mollie Gail of Iowa started out with one and made \$45.00 in the very first month in just her spare time. Mrs. Agnes McCall of South Carolina, did even better. Her spare time in her very first week brought her earnings of \$16.16. Mrs. Wilma Summers of New York turned her spare time into earnings of \$92.00 in her first week and \$248.00 SECOND-MONTH! EARNINGING FOR JUST SPARE TIME and in the very first week give you an idea of the possibilities!

## GUARANTEED AGAINST Runs, Wear and Even Soaps!

Why is it so easy for the first four Hylons to get orders? I'll tell you—Hylons are sold back of Willard. Hylons with the most convincing guarantee you have ever heard of. Your customers can wear them three days. They can develop rags. They can even use them. No matter what happens to make Will-Knit Hylons unsalable, within 3 months, dispatch on quantity. We replace them free of charge under terms of our guarantee. No money needed, are willing to buy Will-Knit? And the wonder is to keep in quantity built up a line and STEADY your annual income. Katherine Clark of Kentucky. Look at these exceptional figures—Lillian A. Brown of Georgia made \$12.00 first week spare time. Ethel Gannon of Maryland, \$16.14. Florence Fisher New York, reports earnings of \$19.14 under our unusual plan just for spare time in her first week. Mrs. Edward Lee of Miss. in writing to thank us for the new Hylons she received, also reports: "I usually earned \$12.00 in twenty minutes by the clock. I certainly couldn't believe I earned that much and I abandoned my former."

## SEND NO MONEY! YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

**STREET MAIL COUPON.** When you send for Will-Knit Hylons, I will send you a coupon of Hylons or Hylons for your personal use. Just mail your coupon for the Hylons and the next month you will receive the coupon for your next order and address will be filled. They'll come and they'll be waiting for you and the amount of money you want to receive! Just mail coupon at once and you will receive it soon from you. You can start the money in FULL or \$1.00 PER WEEK and you can start your own business. **L. Lowell Wilkins**

**WIL-KNIT HOSIERY CO., Inc., 4-1130 Midway, Greenfield, Ohio**



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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ CO. \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_



FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

# THE HAUNT OF



NO. 22  
DECEMBER



10¢

# FEAR<sup>®</sup>

S

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER

GASTLY





GADZOOKS!  
MY JOY KNOWS  
NO BOUNDS! I  
HAVE JUST RECEIVED  
MY E.C. FAN-ADDICT  
CLUB MEMBERSHIP  
KIT WHICH INCLUDES  
A FULL COLOR  
75X105 ILLUMINATED  
CERTIFICATE, A STURDY  
WALLET IDENTIFICATION  
CARD, AN ATTRACTIVE  
EMBROIDERED  
SHOULDER PATCH,  
AND A STUNNING  
ANTIQUE BRONZE  
FINISH BAS-  
RELIEF PIN. SO  
WHAT!

## SO WHAT? SO YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢ IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS, ALONG WITH 25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER. EVERY MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... BY RETURN MAIL.

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 106  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK 12, N.Y.

SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE'S MY TWO BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY, AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO!


NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_

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# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! GREETINGS, MY FINE FETTERED FIENDS. TIME FOR ANOTHER FOUL FEAST IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR. THIS IS YOUR SHRIEK-CHEF, YOUR DELIRIUM-DIETICIAN, THE OLD WITCH, READY WITH MY BUBBLING CAULDRON FILLED WITH MY LATEST REEKING RECIPES. SO RELAX ON THAT MARBLE SETTEE THERE AND I'LL BEGIN MY MUCK-MAG BY FEEDING YOU THE TASTY TALE OF TERROR I CALL...

## WISH YOU WERE HERE



JASON LOGAN SAT WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS IN THE LUXURIOUS LIVING ROOM OF HIS COUNTRY HOME BEFORE HIS GRIM-FACED WIFE, ENID. ALL ABOUT HIM WERE THE EXPENSIVE MEMENTOES OF A MODE OF LIFE NOW LOST TO HIM... RICH SOUVENIRS OF A PERIOD OF SUCCESS AND LAVISH LIVING NOW NO LONGER POSSIBLE. JASON LOGAN WAS BANKRUPT. HIS PERSONAL FORTUNE WAS GONE. HIS CREDITORS WAITED, WITH PALMS OUTSTRETCHED, FOR MONIES JASON OWED THEM. HIS SAVINGS HAD DROPPED, AND THERE REMAINED ONLY OSLING ZEROS IN CANCELLED BANKBOOKS TO REMIND HIM OF HIS ONCE FABULOUS FINANCIAL STRENGTH...

I... I COULD BORROW ON MY INSURANCE POLICIES, ENID... BUT I'D HARDLY GET ENOUGH TO PAY MY DEBTS.

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE WE CAN DO, JASON. THERE MUST...



SHASTLY

ENID LOSAN LOOKED AROUND AT THE PRECIOUS REMEMBRANCES SURROUNDING HER...

WE COULD SELL ALL OF THESE SOUVENIRS, JASON. SOME OF THEM ARE VERY VALUABLE!

NO, ENID, NOT OUR MEMORIES. AT LEAST LET'S HOLD ON TO THE REMINDERS OF THE HAPPY TIMES WE'VE HAD TOGETHER.



ENID SMILED WISTFULLY, RUNNING HER NERVOUS FINGERS OVER THE CARVED IVORY CIGARETTE BOX THEY'D BOUGHT IN ALGIERS, THE DUARTZ ASH TRAY THEY'D FOUND IN CAIRO, THE SILVER URN THEY'D PURCHASED IN DAMASCUS...

WE...WE HAVE HAD HAPPY TIMES TOGETHER, JASON. I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THEM...

THE INSURANCE LOAN WILL TIDE US OVER FOR A WHILE, ENID.



ENID PICKED UP THE STRANGE LITTLE JADE STATUETTE THEY'D FOUND IN THAT MYSTERIOUS LITTLE SHOP ALMOST HIDDEN IN ONE OF THOSE WINDING HONG KONG STREETS...

REMEMBER THIS, JASON? OUR CHINA TRIP? REMEMBER THE WEIRD OLD ORIENTAL SHOP KEEPER?...

YES, YES. WHAT DID HE SAY ABOUT THAT STATUETTE? "USE IT...USE IT WISELY!"



ENID'S EYES WERE MOIST WITH RECOLLECTIONS AS SHE TURNED THE JADE STATUETTE OVER AND OVER IN HER WHITE HANDS, STUDYING IT...

"USE IT WISELY?" I WONDER WHAT THE OLD GENT MEANT BY THAT, ENID.

JASON, DID YOU EVER NOTICE THE WRITING ETCHED INTO THE BASE OF THIS STATUE?



THE JADE STATUE IN ENID'S HAND GLISTENED.

JASON! IT SAYS IT GIVES THREE WISHES. DO YOU THINK THAT'S WHAT THE OLD SHOP KEEPER MEANT BY "USE IT WISELY!"

DON'T BE SILLY, ENID. THAT'S STORY-BOOK NONSENSE. REMINDS ME OF A YARN I ONCE READ! WHAT WAS IT?



JASON STOOD UP, STANDING BESIDE ENID...

WRITING? WHERE?

HERE...IN THE BASE...SEE? IT SAYS...ER..."THREE WISHES I GIVE, AND NO MORE...TO EACH OWNER OF ME, SO KEEP SCORE! EACH WISH WILL COME TRUE, SO TAKE CARE WHAT YOU DO..." I... I CAN'T MAKE OUT THE REST... SOMETHING ABOUT... "DEPLORE"



BUT WHAT IF IT WERE TRUE, JASON? WE...WE COULD WISH FOR MONEY, AND YOU'D BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF YOUR DIFFICULTIES.

WHAT WAS THAT STORY? THE MONKEY'S... THAT'S IT! "THE MONKEY'S PAW!"



ENID HELD THE GLITTERING JADE STATUETTE UP, STARRING AT IT...

I WISH... I WISH FOR MONEY... LOTS OF MONEY. THAT'S WHAT I WISH.

"THE MONKEY'S PAW"! MY GOD! DON'T, ENID...



ENID FELT AN ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE TREMOR VIBRATE THROUGH THE STATUETTE IN HER HANDS. SHE LOOKED AT JASON...

TOO LATE, JASON! I'VE WISHED! WHAT'S WRONG?

N-NOTHING, ENID. I... I JUST THOUGHT ABOUT THAT STORY I READ LONG AGO. IT... IT DOESN'T MATTER, ANYWAY. IT WAS JUST A STORY.



THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE IN THE LOGAN LIVING ROOM. THEN, SUDDENLY, THE PHONE BEGAN TO RING...

HELLO. OH, HELLO, BART. YES, YES. I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!

WHO IS IT, JASON?



JASON HUNG UP. HE TURNED TO HIS WIFE...

THAT WAS BART SHINER... MY LAWYER. HE WANTS ME TO RUSH INTO TOWN... RIGHT AWAY. IT'S IMPORTANT!

DID HE SAY WHAT IT WAS, JASON?



SOMETHING ABOUT MONEY... A WAY OUT.

THERE! YOU SEE? MY WISH IS COMING TRUE.



JASON PAUSED AT THE FRONT DOOR AND KISSED HIS WIFE TENDERLY. THEN HE SLID BEHIND THE WHEEL OF HIS CONVERTIBLE AND ROARED OFF...



BE BACK SOON, DEAR.

DRIVE CAREFULLY, JASON.

ENID WATCHED UNTIL HER HUSBAND'S CAR SWUNG OUT THE DRIVE AND DISAPPEARED DOWN THE PRIVATE ROAD. THEN SHE WENT BACK INTO THE HOUSE, AND STOOD FOR A MOMENT, STARRING AT THE STRANGE LITTLE JADE STATUETTE...



BART SHINER SHOOK HIS HEAD. THEY'D CALLED HIM, AND HE'D PUSHED OUT TO THE FATAL TURN IN THE HIGHWAY WHERE JASON'S CAR HAD PLUMGED, OUT OF CONTROL, INTO THE DEEP GORGE. HE STOOD BESIDE THE TWISTED SHATTERED MASS OF STEEL AND RUBBER AND GLASS AND SHOOK HIS HEAD.



KILLED INSTANTLY, MR SHINER, HIS BODY WAS MANGLED BEYOND RECOGNITION.

HAVE YOU NOTIFIED MRS LOGAN YET?

NOT YET. WE WAITED FOR YOU. WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO BREAK THE NEWS TO HER GENTLY, SEEM' AS YOU'RE A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE FAMILY AND ALL.

THANKS, SHERIFF. I'LL GO RIGHT OVER.



MR. SHINER BROKE THE NEWS AS GENTLY AS HE COULD TO ENID. FOR A LONG MOMENT SHE JUST STOOD THERE... STUNNED...



DEAD! JASON IS DEAD! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, MRS. LOGAN. HE MUST HAVE LOST CONTROL OF THE CAR... SKIDDED OFF THE ROAD...

ENID STARTED FOR THE DOOR MR SHINER HELD HER ARM...



LET ME GO. LET ME GO. I MUST SEE HIM. I WOULDN'T, MRS. LOGAN. IT WAS PRETTY MESSY.

AFTER A WHILE MR. SHINER TOLD ENID...



THIS MAKES YOU A RICH WOMAN, MRS. LOGAN. THE ONE THING YOUR HUSBAND HELD ON TO TILL THE LAST WAS HIS INSURANCE. AND AN ACCIDENT MEANS DOUBLE INDEMNITY!



WHAT IS IT, MRS. LOGAN? I. I WISHED FOR MONEY... LOTS OF MONEY. THIS IS HOW I GOT IT. BY JASON DYING AND I GETTING HIS INSURANCE! OH, GOD... SOB... SOB...



YOU WISHED FOR MONEY? BUT SURELY THIS IS A COINCIDENCE. IT'S NO COINCIDENCE! THIS JADE STATUETTE GAVE US THREE WISHES. I USED THE FIRST ONE WISHING FOR MONEY. NOW I'M GOING TO WISH FOR JASON BACK! I DON'T WANT THE MONEY... SOB... THAT WAY!

END PICKED UP THE JADE STATUETTE.  
SHE HELD IT UP...

I WISH... I WISH...  
ER... MR. SHINER!  
DID YOU EVER  
HEAR OF "THE  
MONKEY'S  
PAW"?

"THE MONKEY'S  
PAW"? THAT'S  
A HORROR  
STORY, ISN'T  
IT?



I DON'T KNOW\*  
JASON MENTIONED  
IT, BEFORE HE...

OF COURSE, THAT'S  
THE STORY BY  
W. W. JACOBS...  
OF AN OLD COU-  
PLE THAT GET A  
MONKEY'S PAW WHICH  
GIVES THEM THREE  
WISHES...



...SO THEY WISH FOR MONEY... WHY  
THEIR SON IS KILLED... NOT?  
HORRIBLY... IN A MACHINE...  
MANGLED, AND... OH,  
LORD! DON'T WISH FOR  
JASON BACK, MRS.  
LOGAN.



IN "THE MONKEY'S PAW,"  
THE MOTHER WISHES THAT  
SHE HAD HER SON BACK...  
AND HE ALMOST DOES  
COME BACK, IN THE CONDI-  
TION OF HIS DEATH...  
MANGLED, TORN...  
NUTILATED...

WHAT  
HAPPENS?



THE FATHER  
USES THE THIRD  
WISH TO SAVE  
THE MOTHER FROM  
THE DORY SIGHT  
BY WISHING HIS  
SON BACK  
INTO THE GRAVE.

THEN I WON'T MAKE  
THEIR MISTAKE,  
MR. SHINER, I'LL  
WISH FOR JASON  
BACK AS HE WAS  
BEFORE THE  
ACCIDENT!



END LOGAN LIFTED THE JADE  
STATUETTE SO THAT IT GLEAMED IN  
THE LIGHT...

I, I WISH THAT I HAD JASON BACK  
AS HE WAS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE  
THE ACCIDENT...



THE THICK SILENCE WAS SUDDENLY SHATTERED BY A  
HEAVY HAMMERING ON THE LOGAN FRONT OOR, MR.  
SHINER OPENED IT...

GOOD LORD! WHAT  
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE  
DOING...?



MRS. LOGAN ORDERED THE  
BODY BACK HERE, SO WE  
BROUGHT IT.

THE GRIN-FACED MEN MOVED INTO THE HOUSE,  
CARRYING THE DARK SOMBRE COFFIN...

JASON!

MRS. LOGAN... PLEASE...



ENID RUSHED TO THE COFFIN...

OPEN IT...  
QUICKLY!  
OH, JASON...  
JASON... IN  
A MOMENT...

MRS. LOGAN, DON'T  
LOOK AT HIM! HIS  
BODY WAS MANGLED  
BEYOND RECOGNITION  
WHEN HE WAS KILLED!

S'MATTER,  
BUB? DON'T  
YOU FEEL  
WELL?



ENID FLUNG OPEN THE COFFIN, SHRIEKING  
HYSTERICALLY...

I WISHED FOR HIM BACK AS HE WAS  
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ACCIDENT...  
BUT HE WAS DEAD IMMEDIATELY BEFORE  
THE ACCIDENT... DEAD OF A HEART  
ATTACK! THE ACCIDENT DIDN'T  
KILL HIM!



ENID KNELT BESIDE THE COFFIN...

ONLY ONE MORE WISH... ENID...  
ONLY ONE. I MUSTN'T  
WASTE IT. I MUST BE  
CAREFUL!



GO AWAY! GO AWAY!  
AND LEAVE ME  
ALONE

ENID, I...



GO AWAY! I WANT  
TO BE ALONE WITH  
HIM, PLEASE...

ALL RIGHT,  
MRS. LOGAN,  
BUT I'LL  
BE BACK...



MR. LOGAN DIED OF A  
HEART ATTACK... AT  
THE WHEEL... HIS CAR  
JUST STOPPED. WHAT  
ARE YOU TALKING  
ABOUT... MANGLED?

HEART ATTACK!  
OH... NO!  
NO!



THE UNDERTAKER'S ASSISTANTS WHO HAD BROUGHT THE BODY  
MOVED OFF SHAKING THEIR HEADS AS ENID SORBED BESIDE  
THE OPEN CASKET...

POOR GAL! SHE'S  
OUT OF HER HEAD  
FROM GRIEF!

AND THAT GUY IN THERE  
ISN'T HELPIN' MY  
TALKIN' ABOUT MANGLED  
BODIES...





AS SOON AS MR. SHINER HAD LEFT, ENID RUSHED TO THE STRANGE LITTLE WIDE STATUETTE. SHE PICKED IT UP.

I WISH... I WISH THAT MY DEAR DARLING WAS ALIVE... BREATHING... TALKING... MOVING... ALIVE! ALIVE!



ENID LOOKED DOWN. JASON'S EYES FLUTTERED OPEN...

JASON? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

ENID?



YES, DARLING IT'S ENID...

ENID, I... I...



MR. SHINER STOOD AT THE TURN IN THE ROAD BESIDE THE DEEP GORGE, LOOKING DOWN AT WHERE HE'D STOOD EARLIER THAT AFTERNOON...

NOT A SIGN OF A WRECK. I... I DON'T BELIEVE IT! IT CAN'T BE...



JASON LOGAN SCREAMED.

JASON... WHAT IS IT?

ENID! ENID... MY GOD... WHAT DID YOU DO?



JASON WRITHED IN THE COFFIN, SHRIEKING IN PAIN.

OH, LORD! ENID! ENID! YOU WISHED ME ALIVE. YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE! WHY DIDN'T YOU LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE? OH, LORD... THE PAIN!

WHAT IS IT, JASON? WHAT'S WRONG?



YOU WISHED ME ALIVE... AND I AM ALIVE... ONLY I'VE BEEN EMBALMED ALREADY! I HAVE NO BLOOD! MY VEINS AND ARTERIES ARE FILLED WITH FORMALDEHYDE!



JASON'S HYSTERICAL SHRIEKS OF PAIN ECHOED THROUGH THE LOGAN HOUSE.



OO SOMETHING, ENID!  
OO SOMETHING!  
STOP THE PAIN!  
THE PAIN!

ENID SCURRIED OUT OF THE LIVING ROOM SOBING. SHE FUMBLER AT JASON'S GUN-RACK IN THE LIBRARY, SNATCHED OUT A RIFLE, LOADED IT, AND...



JASON CONTINUED TO SCREAM, EVEN THOUGH HIS HEAVING CHEST HAD BEEN PIERCED WITH A 30-30 SLUG.



IT DIDN'T KILL ME, ENID!  
NOTHING WILL KILL ME.  
YOU WISHED ME ALIVE!  
I MUST STAY ALIVE!  
OH, PLEASE... OO SOMETHING! THE PAIN!

ENID STUMBLED INTO THE KITCHEN, LOOKING AROUND WILDLY. THE KNIFE-RACK CAUGHT HER EYE. SHE HESITATED... BUT AS JASON'S PAINFUL CRIES ECHOED IN HER EARS, SHE REACHED FOR THE LARGEST KNIFE...



JASON LIVED. AS ENID WILDLY CUT AND HACKED AND SAWED, HE LIVED...SCREAMING AT HER...BEGGING...PLEADING...



OO SOMETHING, ENID!  
OO SOMETHING...

AND EVEN WHEN JASON COULD NO LONGER MAKE A SOUND...WHEN ENID'S FRANTIC HACKING HAD REDUCED HIM TO A MILLION SEVERED SECTIONS... EACH SECTION STILL MOVED AND JERKED AND QUIVERED WITH LIFE. MR. SHINER FOUND HER THAT WAY WHEN HE RETURNED...CUTTING...CUTTING...CUTTING...



GOOD LORD!  
CHORE...

AND MR. SHINER...AND THE OTHERS...THE MEN IN THE WHITE COATS THAT CAME TO TAKE ENID AWAY... NEVER NOTICED THE TINY SEVERED SECTIONS PULSATING...

HEE, HEE! ANYBODY INTERESTED IN BUYING A *SECONDO HAND JADE STATUETTE*...CHEAP? MAYBE YOU CAN USE IT *WISELY*. THINK A MOMENT. WHAT WOULD YOU WISH FOR? NOW THINK *AGAIN*. WHAT DEVILISH *WAY* COULD YOUR WISH COME TRUE? STILL WANT IT? WELL, IT'S FOR SALE. THERE'S A *LITTLE SHOP* IN HONG KONG WITH A WEIRD OLD ORIENTAL PROPRIETOR. DROP IN, SOMETIME. TELL 'IM I SENT YOU! SHOW 'IM YOUR E.G. FAN-ADOIGT CLUB PIN. HE'LL GIVE YOU A *REAL* 6000-BYE!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH. WELCOME TO THE VAULT OF HORROR, HICKS. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HORRENDOUS HAPPENINGS, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO READ ANOTHER REVOLTING REVELATION FROM MY CREEPY COLLECTION. SO SETTLE DOWN ON THAT PARK BENCH THERE, AND I'LL BEGIN. THIS STORY IS TOLD BY ONE MARTIN 'DOC' WHEELS, A RESIDENT OF PLAINVILLE. HE CALLS IT...

## CHESS-MATE

SUDDENLY, THE GAIETY AND THE AIR OF FESTIVITY THAT HAD COVERED MY TOWN LIKE CONFETTI AND TINSEL, AND PINK AND GREEN STREAMERS IS GONE, AND WE ALL STAND ABOUT IN A HUSHED TERRIFIED SILENCE, STARING DOWN AT THE LIFELESS BODY LYING IN THE GUTTER... THE BODY OF ZEB TAYLOR. I LOOK AT MY TOWNSFOLK, AT MAYOR CORNWALL, AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE... AT THE MERCHANTS, AND THE BUSINESSMEN... AND I WONDER IF MY FACE IS AS ASHEN AND PAINTED WITH HORROR AS THEIRS ARE. HOARSELY I WHISPER...

THAT... THAT WAS SOMETHING I NEVER FIGURED ON. THAT WAS SOMETHING I NEVER EXPECTED. I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR LETTING HIM COME HERE TODAY...



I LOOK DOWN AT ZEB... LOWLY, BRILLIANT, OLD ZEB... LYING DEAD AT MY FEET. POOR OLD ZEB. ALL HE EVER WANTED TO DO WAS SIT ON HIS FAVORITE BENCH IN THE TOWN PARK IN HIS OLD STOVEPIPE HAT AND HIS THREAD-BARE COAT, WITH HIS CHESSBOARD BESIDE HIM, SET AND READY WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO COME ALONG. THAT'S THE WAY I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM...



GEORGE OWENS

**'DOC'**. THAT'S WHAT ZEB ALWAYS CALLED ME. NOT THAT I AM A DOCTOR. MY FATHER, MAY HE REST IN PEACE, WAS THE DOCTOR. BUT ZEB CALLED ME 'DOC'... IN HONOR OF MY DAD, PERHAPS.

ALL RIGHT, ZEB. I'LL TRY MY LUCK TODAY.

CHESS IS NO GAME OF LUCK, DOC! IT'S BRAINWORK. ALL BRAINWORK!



YES, THAT'S ALL THAT ZEB TAYLOR WANTED OUT OF LIFE... JUST TO SIT WITH HIS TOWNSFOLK... THE PEOPLE HE LOVED... AND PLAY CHESS WITH THEM. THAT'S HOW ZEB EARNED HIS LIVELIHOOD... **PLAYING CHESS.**

SHALL WE MAKE IT A DOLLAR, TOOKY, ZEB?

SUIT YOURSELF, DOC.



ZEB WAS THE **BEST** CHESS PLAYER I'D EVER SEEN. NO ONE IN TOWN COULD BEAT HIM. BUT WE'D PLAY HIM ANYWAY, AND WE'D BET... A DIME... A DOLLAR... WHATEVER WE COULD AFFORD. THOSE DIMES AND DOLLAR THAT ZEB INVARIABLY WON KEPT HIM IN GRUB...

THAT'S... **CHECK-MATE**, DOC.

ZEB, I'LL BET YOU'RE THE **BEST** CHESS PLAYER IN THE COUNTRY!



ZEB WOULD ALWAYS GRIN UP AT ME FROM UNDER HIS BATTERED HIGH HAT AND WINK...

YOU KNOW WHY, DOC?

YEP, ZEB, I GUESS I DO. WELL, I GOT TO BE GETTIN' ALONG. SEE YOU.



EVERYBODY IN TOWN LOVED ZEB. HE WAS LIKE A FIXTURE. A TRADITION. HARDLY ANYONE ALIVE REMEMBERS THE DAYS BEFORE ZEB STARTED COMING DOWN TO HIS PARK BENCH WITH HIS CHESS SET, AND SITTING THERE IN HIS STOVEPIPE HAT AND BEATING THE PANTS OFF EVERYONE WHO PLAYED HIM A GAME.

DANG-BLAST IT!

CHECKMATE, PHIL. WHO'S NEXT?

ME, YOU OLD GENIUS.



BUT WE'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY EBAN MORISKY CAME TO OUR SLEEPY LITTLE VILLAGE. EBAN MORISKY WAS THE **NUMBER TWO SEED** CHESS PLAYER IN THE COUNTRY. HE'D HEARD ABOUT ZEB TAYLOR AND CAME **TWO THOUSAND MILES** TO PLAY HIM...

SIT DOWN, MR. MORISKY.

AN HONOR, MR. TAYLOR.



OH, WHAT A CHESS GAME THAT WAS! IT LASTED ALMOST **TWO WHOLE DAYS**. NATURALLY, WE ALL ROOTED FOR ZEB. BUT HE DIDN'T NEED OUR SUPPORT. HE OUT-MANUEVERED MORISKY ALL THE WAY... WON, HANDS DOWN.

MR. TAYLOR. ALL I CAN SAY IS YOU ARE PROBABLY THE **BEST** CHESS PLAYER IN THE WHOLE WORLD. I BOW TO YOUR SUPERIORITY.

THANK YOU KINDLY, MR. MORISKY.



I REMEMBER HOW MAYOR CORNWALL STEPPED UP TO MR. MOROSKY AND INTRODUCED HIMSELF...

YOU ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED, MAYOR. IF MR. TAYLOR, HERE, EVER PLAYED THE INTERNATIONAL CHESS CHAMPION, HE WOULD NO DOUBT WIN AND BRING FAME TO YOUR FINE CITY.

THAT SO, MR. MOROSKY?

ABSOLUTELY, MAYOR CORNWALL. YOU SHOULD TRY TO CONVINCE HIM TO ENTER THE INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS IN SAN FRANCISCO NEXT MONTH.

WHAT ABOUT IT, ZEB? FOR PLAINVILLE?

NO, THANK YOU, MAYOR. I'M NOT LEAVING PLAINVILLE. I LIKE IT HERE.

TOO BAD YOU FEEL THAT WAY, MR. TAYLOR. YOU WOULD PLAY SOME OF THE WORLD'S BEST CHESS PLAYERS BEFORE HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF CHESS ENTHUSIASTS. AND YOU'LL WIN, I'M SURE OF IT.

THANKS JUST THE SAME, MR. MOROSKY. BUT I'M NOT INTERESTED.

ZEB!

I REMEMBER HOW MAYOR CORNWALL PLEADED WITH ZEB...

ZEB, THIS IS A CHANCE TO PUT PLAINVILLE ON THE MAP. THINK OF YOUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS WHO WOULD BENEFIT BY THE TOURIST TRADE... PEOPLE COMING HERE TO SEE YOU... TO PLAY YOU...

I'M SORRY, MAYOR. HERE I AM... AND HERE I'LL STAY.

PERHAPS... IF I WERE TO SPEAK TO SOME PEOPLE...

MOROSKY DROPPED THE BOMBHELL INTO THE MAYOR'S LAR...

... PERHAPS, WE COULD HOLD THE TOURNAMENT HERE. I CANNOT SEE SUCH SUPERIOR TALENT WASTED.

HERE, MR. MOROSKY? YOU WOULD HOLD THE TOURNAMENT HERE IN PLAINVILLE?

I THINK IT COULD BE ARRANGED. IF I TOLD THE MEMBERS OF THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE ABOUT MR. TAYLOR, I'M SURE THEY WOULD CONSIDER HOLDING IT HERE!

NO!

ZEB STOOD UP, ANGRILY...

NO! I WON'T DO IT! I WON'T ENTER ANY TOURNAMENT... HERE OR ANYWHERE.

ZEB! ZEB, THINK OF WHAT THIS COULD MEAN!

ZEB PICKED UP HIS CHESSMEN, POPPED THEM INTO A BOX, AND FOLDED HIS BOARD.

IS THIS HOW YOU REPAY US, ZEB TAYLOR? WE'VE BEEN GOOD TO YOU! WE'VE SAT WITH YOU AND PLAYED CHESS WITH YOU AND LOST GOOD MONEY TO YOU, EVEN THOUGH WE KNEW WE'D LOSE. IS THIS HOW YOU REPAY US?

I'M SORRY YOU FEEL THAT WAY, MAYOR. GOOD DAY!



I REMEMBER HOW EVERYBODY STARED AFTER ZEB AS HE STROOGE OFF. NOW THE MAYOR TURNED TO ME.

WHEEMS! CAN'T YOU REASON WITH HIM? THINK OF THE BOOM THIS TOWN WOULD HAVE IF THE INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENTS WERE HELD HERE!

MY HOTEL WOULD BE JAMMED.



MY BAR WOULD BE DRAINED DRY.

MY STORE-SHELVES WOULD BE CLEANED!

WE'D ALL MAKE MONEY!

WHEEMS! TALK TO HIM!



I SHRUGGED MY SHOULDERS.

I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO, GENTLEMEN.

MR. MORSSKY, YOU SPEAK TO YOUR COMMITTEE. WE'LL TAKE CARE OF ZEB.

GOOD. GOOD. SUCH BRAINPOWER DESERVES RECOGNITION. HE IS TRULY A GENIUS... A REMARKABLE GENIUS.



THAT NIGHT, I REPORTED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

I'M SORRY TO REPORT, GENTLEMEN, THAT ZEB TAYLOR STILL REFUSES TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY TOURNAMENT. HE DOES NOT WANT FAME OR PUBLICITY. I CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITH HIM.

WHY, THE OLD UNGRATEFUL... THEN WE'LL HAVE TO CANCEL OUR PLANS AND WIRE MORSSKY!



THE MAYOR STOOD UP.

GENTLEMEN, I HAVE AN IDEA. WE DO NOT WIRE MORSSKY. LET HIM GO AHEAD WITH HIS PLANS. I THINK THAT A BOYCOTT OF MR. TAYLOR BY EVERYONE IN TOWN WILL SOON BRING HIM AROUND. IN FACT... JUST ABOUT IN TIME FOR THE TOURNAMENTS.



AND SO, THE 'BOYCOTT' OF ZEB TAYLOR STARTED NOONE WOULD SPEAK TO HIM. HE SAT FOR DAYS ON HIS PARK BENCH BESIDE HIS CHESS SET WITHOUT PLAYING A SINGLE GAME...

HOWDY, GLEM? CARE FOR A...

HIMPH!



I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO WOULD TALK TO ZEB.

THEY'RE PRETTY **SORE** AT ME, **AREN'T** THEY, DOC?

THEY'RE THINKIN' ABOUT THEIR **POCKETBOOKS**, ZEB.



YOU KNOW I CAN'T STAND ANY **PUBLICITY**, DOC.

I **KNOW**, ZEB. BUT I DON'T SEE WHY YOU CAN'T ENTER THE **TOURNAMENT**, ESPECIALLY IF THEY HOLD IT **HERE** IN **PLAIN-VILLE**...



BUT THEY'LL PROBABLY HOLD IT IN THE **TOWN HALL** SO THEY COULD CHARGE **ADMISSION**... AND THAT MEANS BEING **INDOORS**, AND YOU **KNOW** I CAN'T GO **INDOORS** WITHOUT

I'LL **FIX** IT, ZEB. I **SWEAR** IT. I'LL **FIX** IT!



WELL, IF YOU CAN **FIX** IT, I'LL AGREE TO ENTER THE **TOURNAMENT**.

IT'S A **DEAL**, ZEB.



I REPORTED TO THE CHAMBER OF **COMMERCE**...

ZEB WILL AGREE TO ENTER THE **TOURNAMENT** ON **ONE CONDITION** THAT HE PLAYS HIS OPPONENTS ON HIS **USUAL BENCH** IN THE **PARK**

BUT HOW COULD WE CHARGE **ADMISSION** IF IT'S **OUT-DOORS**?



YOU FIGURE IT OUT, MAYOR. THAT'S **JEB'S** **CONDITION**.

WE'LL **ROPE** OFF THE **PARK** AND ERECT A **GRANDSTAND** AROUND THE **BENCH**.

AND **PRAY** IT **DOESN'T** **RAIN**.



I WENT BACK TO **JEB** AND TOLD HIM THE **NEWS**...

I'VE **FIXED** IT, ZEB. YOU'LL PLAY ON YOUR **USUAL BENCH** IN THE **PARK**... **OUTDOORS**.

ALL RIGHT, DOC. BUT I'LL BE **PREPARED**... **JUST IN CASE**. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FACE THEM, IF IF



THE OPENING DAY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENTS OWNED BRIGHT AND CLEAR. ALL WEEK LONG, PEOPLE HAD BEEN STREAMING INTO PLAINVILLE, AND THE CASH REGISTERS HAD BEEN CLANGING AWAY. NOW, THE OFFICIAL DAY'D ARRIVED. I DROVE OUT TO PICK UP ZEB...

EVERYBODY'S WAITING FOR YOU, ZEB. LET'S GO.

I'M WORRIED, DOC. SOMETHING'S BOUND TO GO WRONG.



WHAT COULD GO WRONG, ZEB? IT'S JUST LIKE ITS ALWAYS BEEN. YOU'LL BE OUTDOORS. YOU CAN WEAR YOUR OLD HIGH HAT...

I'M STILL WORRIED.



THE TOWN WAS JAMMED. EVERYBODY APPLAUDED ZEB AS HE CLIMBED ONTO THE HASTILY ERCTED PLATFORM...

AND HERE HE IS, FOLKS. ZEB TAYLOR. PLAINVILLE'S MENTAL WONDER.

START THE PARADE!



I REMEMBER HOW THE CHILL CURLED UP MY BACK AS, BEYOND THE SQUARE, A BAND STRUCK UP A BRASSY MARCH AND THE CROWD CLEARED A PATH...

DOC... DOC... A PARADE?

I KNOW, ZEB. I KNOW. I DIDN'T FIGURE ON THIS.



...AND THEN, THE FLAG COMING DOWN THE STREET, COMING BY THE PLATFORM, AND EVERYBODY TAKING OFF THEIR HATS AND PUTTING THEM OVER THEIR HEARTS, AND ZEB STANDING THERE, CONFUSED, FRIGHTENED...

HEY, ZEB! IT'S THE AMERICAN FLAG!

TAKE OFF YOUR HAT!

HEY, ZEB...



I REMEMBER ZEB LIFTING HIS HAND TO HIS OLD STOVEPIPE HAT, WHILE HE LOOKED AT ME WITH THAT HELPLESS, RESIGNED EXPRESSION...

...AND THE CROWD STARING AT HIM IN HORROR AND DISGUST AND REVULSION AS HE REMOVED IT...

AND THE TWO SHOTS THAT RANG OUT...

GOOD LORD!

CHOKO!

ZEB! MY GOD! DON'T...





SO NOW I STAND WITH THE REST OF MY TOWNSFOLK, STARING DOWN AT ZEB TAYLOR'S DEAD BODY, AND I SAY...

I NEVER FIGURED ON THE PARADE OR THE FLAG... OR ELSE I WOULD NOT HAVE LET HIM COME HERE TODAY. YOU SEE, I KNEW ABOUT ZEB. WHEN MY FATHER DIED, HE LEFT ME ALL OF HIS RECORDS. I READ ABOUT THE STRANGE BIRTH



BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE THEM LIKE THIS... FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.

WELL, MR. TAYLOR, IF YOU FOLKS WILL AGREE TO A PLAN I HAVE, I COULD SEPARATE THEM. AND BOTH WOULD REMAIN ALIVE, IN A SENSE...



'BACK BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, ZEB TAYLOR'S MOTHER GAVE BIRTH TO TWINS. MY FATHER WAS THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN...

MY WIFE, DOCTOR? HOW IS SHE?

SHE'S FINE, MR. TAYLOR. IT'S YOUR TWINS. THEY'RE... THEY'RE SIAMESE TWINS!



'YES, ZEB TAYLOR WAS ONE OF A PAIR OF SIAMESE TWINS JOINED TOGETHER AT THE TOPS OF THEIR HEADS...

CAN'T YOU SEPARATE THEM, DOCTOR?

NO, MR. TAYLOR. THE TWO BRAINS ARE JOINED TOGETHER! SEPARATING THE TWINS THERE WOULD KILL THEM BOTH.



MR. AND MRS. TAYLOR AGREED... AND THERE, IN THAT FARMHOUSE KITCHEN, WITH HIS LIMITED INSTRUMENTS, MY FATHER SEPARATED THE TAYLOR SIAMESE TWINS



...BY DECAPITATING ZEB'S TWIN-BROTHER'S HEAD FROM HIS BODY, LEAVING IT JOINED TO ZEB'S HEAD.



I LOOK DOWN AT ZEB TAYLOR...

THAT'S WHY ZEB ALWAYS WORE A HIGH HAT... TO COVER HIS OTHER HEAD. AND THAT'S WHY HE WAS SUCH A MENTAL MARVEL. HE HAD TWO BRAINS. BUT HE COULD NEVER FACE YOU ALL, KNOWING YOU KNEW HIS SECRET. SO HE SHOT HIMSELF.



HEH, HEH, GET IT, KIDDEES? THAT'S WHY THERE WERE TWO SHOTS! IN ORDER TO COMMIT SUICIDE, ZEB HAD TO BLOW BOTH HIS BRAINS OUT! WELL, THAT'S 'DOC'S' STORY. AND IS HE GLAD HE GOT IT OFF HIS CHESS. OF COURSE HE STILL CAN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT. HE KEEPS ROCKING AT ZEB, LYING IN THE GUTTER, WITH THE TWO HEAT, QUEEN HOLES IN HIS HEADS! OH, MY A-KING BACK! WHAT AWFUL PAINNS! I'D BETTER TURN YOU



BACK TO THE OLD WITCH, AS THE BEBOPPER SAID WHEN HE SAW THE NEW YORK SKYLINE. 'DIG THAT CRA-A-AZY CHESS SET!'

BYE.

**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST  
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION  
MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...**



**LOOK FOR  
THESE SEALS  
WHEN YOU BUY!**

**THEY ARE YOUR ASSURANCE OF TOP  
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THE FOLLOWING E.C. MAGAZINES:**

**TALES FROM THE CRYPT  
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MAD  
WEIRD SCIENCE • WEIRD FANTASY  
AND THE 25¢ ANNUAL ANTHOLOGIES:  
WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY  
TWO-FISTED ANNUAL • TALES OF TERROR**



Bending over the simmering vat of molten lead, Moonshine Edwards felt the sweat spilling down the small of his back. The crude bullets he was making were white-hot; the fire roaring under the pot in which the liquid metal bubbled and boiled cast grotesque lights across Moonshine's craggy face. In just a few more moments the bullets would be shaped and ready to cool. Then let the Revenue Agents try to raid his mountain Still, Moonshine thought with a grin. They'd get themselves a bellyful of hot lead for their trouble!

A half-dozen sizzling slugs already reposed on the rock beside the old hunting gun: 6 more bullets dipped out of the vat and Moonshine would be ready to repulse the impending siege. It was like the old days his paw used to talk about . . . the days when a self-respecting mountain man shrugged off these raids like rain-water. His face flushed from the fiery vat, Moonshine chuckled aloud, his tongue stabbing at a rivulet of perspiration streaming over his taut, hot skin. His paw certainly knew how to deal with revenuers when they tried to demolish the family Still! Lordy, Moonshine guffawed, how the ol' man loved to slaughter them gov'ment agents!

Moonshine leaned forward and carefully lifted 2 sizzling slugs from the vat, dropping them into place on the cooling rock. Like that time,

Moonshine thought, when paw ambushed 4 guv'ment men who came up the hill armed to the teeth! With just 4 home-made slugs, made in this same pot, paw had wiped out the interlopers! Moonshine grinned as he remembered watching the corpses plunging headlong down the scrubby mountainside.

He felt cramped, crouched as he was over the bubbling pot. Moonshine straightened up to ease the crick in his back and, somehow, he lost his footing. Falling backwards, Moonshine instinctively reached forward to regain his balance; in the next instant an unearthly yowl of pain split the air. Moonshine's right hand, which he stared at in frightened amazement, was already swollen monstrously and turning an ugly purple-black. The stench of burning flesh which hung in the air was completely unnoticed by Moonshine, so great was his agony. The vat of white-hot lead into which he had accidentally plunged his hand, continued to sizzle ... but the sound was drowned out now by Moonshine's piercing roars of pain.

A minute of searing torture passed, before the agony began to subside slightly. Looking, then, at the ruins of his right hand, on which the destroyed flesh was already beginning to slither off like the dead flesh of a rattlesnake, Moonshine knew he would never again be able to use the limb.

"Of all the lousy luck!" Moonshine whimpered, biting his lip to keep back the hot tears. "Now I'll never be able to fire my gun and get me a bunch of revenuers like paw did! All my preparations ... gone plumb to waste!"



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# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Hee, hee! It's sweeping the country! Our HORROR HIT PARADE has become a CREEPY CRAZE! Dig the latest BITTER-BLOOD tunes from Nelson Bridwell of Oklahoma City, Pat Patrick and Bruce Hamilton of Lubbock, Texas, Paul Hess of Omaha, Neb., Ralph Monti of Who Knows, Where?, George Stokes of Miami, Okla., Dennis Bartschack of Ocean Springs, Miss., and Elsie Friend of Yreka, Cal.:

I CAN'T BEGIN TO SMELL YOU  
I SAW MAGGOTS EATING SANTA CLAUS  
WHY DON'T YOU REBEAVE ME  
(IT'S YOU I ASHORE)  
LET ME MAUL YOU, SWEETHEART  
I Poured you LAST NIGHT  
(AND GOT THAT MOLD FEELING)  
DON'T LET HOT TAR GET IN YOUR EYES  
OPEN MY SORE, RICHARD  
SMELL ME, I'M GORY  
SOAK LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO GNAW YA  
THE MAN WHO BROKE MY BACK AT  
MONTE CARLO  
I'M GETTING SEDIMENTAL UNDERGROUND  
DOIN' WHAT COMES SUPERNATURALLY  
SHE WEARS LEAD FETTERS

And here are some examples of GORY STORIES to add to your LURID LITERATURE LIBRARY, contributed by Nelson Bridwell (again that boy!), Putrid Pete, Slimy Sam, and Gory George of Heaven Only Knows, Where?, Keith Gentiles of Spring Grove, Pa., and Carl Shapiro of Jersey City:

GREAT AMPUTATIONS  
THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN VAMPIRE  
SILAS MOURNER  
JULIUS! SEIZE HER!  
UNDER TWO HAGS  
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S SCREAM  
THE MAUL OF THE CHILD  
GROAN WITH THE WIND  
THE READERS DISSECT  
DAVID COPPERHEAD  
THE POISONER OF BRENDA  
TOM BROWN'S GHOUL DAYS  
GREAT EXPECTORATIONS  
THE GORE-SICKENED BROTHERS  
THE MERCHANT OF MENACE  
THE MAIMING OF THE SHREW

NEW DEPARTMENT DEPT. PULSATING POGROMS from your T.V. SCREAM and your AM-FM LOUD-SHREKER, suggested by Allen Matter and Nigel Cadell of Newburyport, Mass., Jack Demcak of Lamford, Pa., and Nelson Bridwell (oh, really!):

I LOATHE LUCY  
BREAK THE BACK  
ALL-SCAR REVIEW

MY FIEND IRMA  
STRIKE IT, WITCH  
BRIDE AND GLOOM  
TROUBLE OR NOTHING  
MILTON'S BOILED  
ARTHUR GOT FREE FROM HIS FIENDS  
MAN AGAINST SLIME  
WHAT'S MY CRIME  
YOU GASSED FOR IT  
CHEW FOR THE MONEY  
THE GEORGE BURNED GRACIE ALLEN SHOW

And now some reactions to the "E.C. Classic," reprinted in H.F. No. 20...

Dear Old Crane,

I think your dipping back into the past to bring us classic E.C. yarns is a wonderful idea. This is a great break for the recent E.C. fan.

Wayne Fenton  
Belts, L. I.

... I congratulate you for printing a horror yarn from the past. I'm looking forward to seeing many more E.C. Classics in future issues.

Alan Katz  
Flushing, N. Y.

... You gorgeous doll! You Santa Claus! I love you, love you, love you! Please more old stories like "Terror Train" in H.F. No. 20.

DeRay Green &  
Juanita Wellons  
Muncie, Ind.

... You guys must really be in tough shape! By reprinting that old story, you reached the ultimate low in comics. You were real cute about it though. You made it look as if you were doing us fans a big favor.

Ed Spiegel  
Troy, N. Y.

... I think you're degrading yourself by selling reprints in a first-edition mag.

Richard S. Coombs  
Augusta, Maine

Oh well, you can't please everybody! But for you fans who ARE pleased, the E.C. FAN ADDICT CLUB is writing for your two bits! See the inside front cover of this mag for info and coupon! And we have a very limited supply (7,255,008 copies!) left of E.C.'s big 128 page horror anthology... the 1953 edition of TALES OF TERROR, containing reprints of past folios... yours for another two bits! And then there are subscriptions... six issues for 75¢! And there there is the address for T. T. orders, sub orders, and more little gems from your creative cranium:

The Old Witch  
Room 706, Dept. 22  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

# THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HEE, HEE! I SEE THAT G.K. IN HIS LAST MAG (T.C. #39) DID SOME RESEARCH AND CAME UP WITH THE TRUE FACTS BEHIND THE *SLEEPING BEAUTY* LEGEND. WELL, HERE'S YOUR OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE...THE REAL STORY OF...

## SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS



IN HER PALACE BEDROOM, THE WICKED VAIN QUEEN STOOD BEFORE HER 297 SQ. INCH. MAGIC MIRROR T.V. SET.

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL... WHO'S THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL?

I USED TO THINK THAT YOU WERE, SWEETIE! BUT NOW SNOW WHITE HAS GOT YOU BEATY!

CHANEL NO. 5

TUNE  
VOLUME  
BATTN' OUT TUBILL  
WILL GOOD CHILLEN GOT TUBILL

THE ANGRY QUEEN TURNED PURPLE WITH RAGE...

SNOW WHITE! THE PRINCESS! SHE IS FAIRER THAN I?

I'M NO BEAUTY EXPERT, HONEY, BUT WHAT SNOW WHITE'S GOT, YOU CAN'T BUY WITH MONEY!

HOO-HA!

RED CHANNEL

DOUBLE PAGE  
STRETCH-PAUSE  
LEAVE FRONT

A QUICK PHONE CALL AND...

YOU SENT FOR A MESSENGER, FAIR QUEEN?

NOBODY CRAMPS MY STYLE 'ROUND THIS JOINT! NOBODY! HERE, BOY! DELIVER THIS ERASURE NOTICE TO THE ROYAL AXEMAN. AND MAKE IT SNAPPY!

IN THE SPOTLESS PALACE BALLROOM, THE BEAUTIFUL SNOW WHITE SANG MERRILY AS SHE SWEEPED...



WHO "PSSTS" ME FROM BEHIND THE COLUMN? OH, IT IS YOU, ROYAL AXEMAN. CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY GLEANING?



POOR MAMA! POOR CRAZY MIXED-UP QUEEN! WHY-FORE DO YOU THINK SHE WANTS YOU TO DO THAT?

SHE IS JEALOUS OF YOUR BEAUTY, OH, LOVELY SNOW WHITE. PLEASE! TAKE MY ADVICE! BLOW!



HOW GLEVER, ROYAL AXEMAN. WHEN I BLOW, I BLOW ALL THE HORRIBLE DUST AWAY! CAN'T STAND DUST!



LOOK, PRINCESS! I GOT NO AXE TO GRIND FOR YOU! WHY DON'T YOU SCRAM?! RUN AWAY... INTO THE IMPEN-ETRA... IMPENETRA... THE THICK FOREST!



AND IF I DON'T? THEN I'LL HAVE TO CHOP OFF YOUR HEAD!



DON'T! WAIT! ALL THAT BLOOD WILL MESS UP THIS SPOTLESS BALLROOM. ALL RIGHT! I'LL GO. I'LL RUN AWAY. I'LL DO AS YOU SUGGEST, AS SOON AS I FINISH GLEANING!



GO, NOW, SNOW WHITE! BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE! I'LL FINISH!



I AM OFF, OH, AXEMAN. THANK YOU FOR SPARING MY LIFE. IF I CAN EVER... HEY! NOT UNDER THE RUG!



GO, ALREADY!



AND SO, LUSCIOUS SNOW WHITE RAN AWAY INTO THE IMPENETRA. THE THICK FOREST, SINGING...

SHE'LL WHISPER, I LOVE YOU!  
MARRY ME... AND THE REST OF THE GOD...



WHILE, BACK AT THE PALACE, THE VAIN WICKED QUEEN TUNED IN CHANNEL 14...

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL,  
NOW WHO'S FAIREST OF THEM ALL?  
SNOW WHITE, LADY! SHE'S STILL GLICKIN'! THE SOFT-HEARTED AXEMAN WENT AND TURNED CHICKEN!



THE LIVIO QUEEN SUMMONED THE AXEMAN...

DID YOU CHOP OFF HER HEAD? ANSWER ME!

SUCH A QUESTION! OF COURSE! I KNOW MY JOB! I'M A TWENTY EAR MAN!

MY MAGIC MIRROR SET WITH THE SYNCHRO-LOCK RECTIFYING TURRET-TUNER TOLD ME SNOW WHITE STILL IS FAIREST!

SO SHE LOOKS GOOD EVEN WITHOUT A HEAD! SO SUE ME!

LIAR! LIAR! YOU LET HER GET AWAY! OFF WITH YOUR HEAD!

THIS'LL BE THE NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK!



MEANWHILE, GORGEOUS SNOW WHITE CAME UPON A RUN-DOWN HOUSE DEEP IN THE IMPENETRA...DEEP IN THE IMPENETRA...DEEP IN THE THICK FOREST...

OH, WHAT A MISERABLE LITTLE NOVEL! G.I. BILL, NO DOUBT...

I WILL OPEN THE MISERABLE LITTLE DOOR...



AFTER SNOW WHITE DUG HERSELF OUT FROM UNDER THE PILE OF JUNK, SHE WENT INSIDE...

OH, DEAR. WHAT A MESS. THINGS SCATTERED EVERYWHERE. DUST COVERING EVERYTHING. WINDOWS FILTHY. BEDS UNMADE. BEDS!?



ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN? SEVEN LITTLE BEDS. WHY THIS MUST BE THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS. PERHAPS IF I CLEANED UP THE PLACE, THEY'D LET ME STAY.



SO SNOW WHITE SET TO WORK WITH PAIL AND MOP AND DUST CLOTH AND ELECTROLUX, SINGING...



WHILE DEEPER INTO THE FOREST, SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS WORKED IN THEIR LITTLE URANIUM MINE, SINGING...



THE SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS STARTED HOME, SINGING THEIR HOMEWARD-BOUND MARCHING SONG. FIRST CAME BOOMFUSS..... THEN, DENTIST... FOLLOWED BY SHFLY..... COUSHY..... TIED..... CRAZY..... AND FINALLY STUPID.





WHEN THE SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS ARRIVED AT THEIR ONCE MISERABLE LITTLE HOVEL, THEY FOUND...



SO THAT'S HOW SNOW WHITE CAME TO LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS AND, OH WHAT A DIFFERENCE HER PRESENCE MADE. THE LITTLE MEN LEARNED A NEW WAY OF LIFE...



EVERY DAY, AS THE LITTLE MEN WOULD TRAMP OFF TO WORK ALL STARCHED AND NEAT AND CLEAN, THEY'D WARN...



ONE DAY SNOW WHITE OPENED THE LITTLE DOOR IN ANSWER TO A SOFT KNOCK...



FOOLISHLY, SNOW WHITE TOOK ONE OF THE OLD CRONE'S APPLES. SHE BIT INTO IT...



SNOW WHITE COLLAPSED...



AND THEN...



SO THE SEVEN LITTLE DWARFS STORMED BACK INTO THEIR SPOTLESS LITTLE HOUSE AND PROCEEDED TO TURN IT INTO A MISERABLE Hovel AGAIN...



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH. GREETINGS, GHOULS! THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, YOUR GRUESOME GUIDE THROUGH THE CRYPT OF TERROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO SET SAIL ON ANOTHER VICIOUS VOYAGE INTO VILE VISAGES. SO HERE GOES WITH SIDNEY'S OWN TALE, TOLD IN HIS VERY OWN MAILING WORDS. SIDNEY CALLS IT...

## MODEL NEPHEW

I STAND ON THE FLAGSTONE PATIO OUTSIDE HIS PALATIAL MANSION, STARING IN AT MY RICH OLD UNCLE SITTING ALONE IN HIS LIBRARY, AND I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO. I CANNOT WAIT ANY LONGER. I AM IN TOO DEEP. I NEED MONEY BADLY, AND, SINCE I AM UNCLE'S ONLY LIVING RELATIVE AND SOLE HEIR TO HIS FORTUNE, THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET MONEY, NOW, IMMEDIATELY, IS TO KILL HIM. SO I PUSH OPEN THE FRENCH DOORS.

HUH? WHO  
WHO'S THERE?

IT'S ME, UNCLE. YOUR  
NEPHEW, SIDNEY!



UNCLE STUDIES ME FOR A MOMENT, THEN TURNS BACK TO HIS WORK... TO HIS SHIP MODEL... SMILING...

COME TO ASK FOR MONEY AGAIN, SIDNEY? WELL, YOU'LL NOT GET IT. NOT ONE RED CENT. I'M SICK AND TIRED OF YOU PHILANDERING...

I CAME TO GET IT ALL THIS TIME, UNCLE...



UNCLE'S HANDS BEGIN TO SHAKE SO THAT HE DROPS THE TINY MIZZEN. MUST HE HOLD WITH THE LONG SLENDER TWEEZERS...

YOU'LL GET IT ALL, SONEY... WHEN I'M DEAD! BUT NOT ONE MINUTE BEFORE...

I KNOW, UNCLE.



HE TURNS TO ME, AND THERE IS A FEAR IN HIS OLD EYES... THE FEAR OF A MAN WHO HAS SUDDENLY REALIZED THAT HE IS FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH. I MOVE TOWARD HIM...

YOU SHOULDN'T...

OH, WOULDN'T I, UNCLE...?



HIS JAW DROPS OPEN AND HE STARTS TO CRY OUT. I CLAP MY HAND OVER HIS MOUTH... HIS NOSE... CUTTING OFF HIS AIR!

DON'T STRUGGLE, UNCLE! IT WILL ALL BE OVER IN A MOMENT.

S-S-S-S-S!



I WATCH AS UNCLE'S FACE TURNS RED... THEN BLUE... AND HIS EYES FAIRLY POP FROM HIS HEAD AS THE LAST DROP OF OXYGEN IN HIS BLOODSTREAM IS ABSORBED...

SUFFOCATION CAN LOOK SO MUCH LIKE A HEART ATTACK, UNCLE! ONE CAN RARELY TELL THE DIFFERENCE... ESPECIALLY IN AN AGED PERSON...



UNCLE STIFFENS AS HIS LIFE EBBS AND DISSOLVES. AS HE DIES, HE SWINGS HIS ARMS BEFORE HIM, SWEEPING THE BOTTLE CONTAINING THE SHIP MODEL HE'D BEEN WORKING ON FROM HIS DESK.



THE BOTTLE SMASHES INTO A THOUSAND JAGGED FRAGMENTS WITH A SPLITTING CRASH AND THE TINY SHIP SPLINTERS INTO A SMALL PILE OF STRINGS AND TOOTHPICKS AND BALSA WOOD.

THAT'S SURE TO BRING THE SERVANTS. I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE.



I RELEASE MY UNCLE'S LIFELESS BODY, AND I DART FROM THE LIBRARY, OUT OF THE FRENCH DOORS, CLOSING THEM BEHIND ME. FROM A SAFE HIDING-PLACE AMONG THE BUSHES BEYOND THE PATIO, I WATCH THE SERVANT ENTER AND STAND DUMPSOUNDED AS HE VIEWS UNCLE'S CORPSE.



A FEW DAYS LATER, AT THE LAWYER'S OFFICE, MY LATE UNCLE'S WILL IS READ AND I LISTEN TO THE WORDS THAT MAKE ME A WEALTHY MAN...

...AND SO, TO MY NEPHEW SIDNEY, I LEAVE MY ENTIRE ESTATE, SAVE THOSE POSSESSIONS THAT ARE NEAR AND DEAR TO ME... MY OLD SEA CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM AND MY COLLECTION OF SHIPS-IN-BOTTLES. THESE, I REQUEST, BE INTERRED WITH MY BONES...



YEP, SIDNEY. THAT'S HER... EVERY SPAR AND LANYARD, MADE THAT MODEL MYSELF.

HOW'D YOU GET IT IN THE BOTTLE, UNCLE?

HEH, HEH. THAT'S A SECRET, BOY! A SECRET.

AW, I DON'T CARE, ANYWAY!

BUT I DID CARE. I REMEMBER STEALING TO THE LIBRARY ONE NIGHT AND WATCHING, FASCINATED, AS UNCLE CAREFULLY FITTED THE TINY SECTIONS OF HIS SHIP MODELS IN THROUGH THE NARROW NECK OF THE BOTTLE AND GLUED THEM INTO PLACE.



AND AS I GREW INTO MATURITY, AND I DISCOVERED HOBBIES OF MY OWN... CARS, AND WOMEN, AND HORSE RACES... THINGS THAT REQUIRED MONEY... I REMEMBER COMING TO MY UNCLE, AND BEGGING FOR A HANDOUT, AND HIM WORKING ON THOSE MISERABLE SHIP MODELS...

UNCLE, I...

SH-H-N-H! NOT NOW! THIS IS A TICKLISH PART...



BUT NOW ALL THAT IS OVER. I WILL NEVER HAVE TO BEG FOR ANOTHER CENT. IT IS ALL MINE... EVERYTHING. THE LAWYER, READING THE WILL, TELLS ME THAT...

...AND THAT I BE PLACED IN THE MAUSOLEUM I HAVE BUILT FOR MYSELF IN FAIRHAVEN CEMETERY, ALONG WITH THESE NEAR AND DEAR POSSESSIONS...

GOOD RIDDANCE...



THE FUNERAL IS A SIMPLE AFFAIR. I HAVE SEEN TO THAT AFTER ALL. WHY WASTE MONEY ON THE DEAD OLD GOAT, BUT I HAVE TO KEEP MYSELF FROM LAUGHING, AS THE SERVANTS FILE INTO THE MAUSOLEUM AND PLACE HIS STUPID SHIP-MODELS BESIDE HIS COFFIN...



...AND DRAPE HIS MOTH-EATEN OLD UNIFORM AND CAP OVER THE SILENT SOMBER COFFIN...



AS SOON AS MY LATE UNCLE'S AFFAIRS ARE PUT IN ORDER AND HIS ESTATE IS TURNED OVER TO ME, I GO ON A WILD SPENDING BINGE...NO HOLDS BARRED. I GET RID OF ALL MY INHIBITIONS IN ONE MAD CONTINUOUS SPREE OF WINE, WOMEN, AND SONG...



ONE NIGHT, RETURNING HOME FROM MY LATEST FUN-SEKING ESCAPADE, I FIND MYSELF DOWN BY THE WATER-FRONT, A LITTLE HIGH, WALKING DOWN A DESERTED, WINDING, FOG-BLANKETED, COBBLE-STONED STREET. AS I STAGGER ALONG, I HEAR A VOICE...



A FIGURE STANDS BEFORE ME, SILHOUETTED IN THE HAZY LIGHT FROM A DISTANT STREET LAMP...A FIGURE IN A SEA-CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM...



I TRY TO PEER INTO THE GLOOM, TO MAKE OUT THE FEATURES OF THE STOOPED FIGURE STANDING BEFORE ME, BUT THE LIQUOR I HAVE CONSUMED DULLS MY SENSES...



WE MUST HURRY, SIDNEY!

KEEP AWAY FROM ME! KEEP AWAY.

HE COMES TOWARD ME, SHAMBLING OVER THE COBBLESTONES. SUDDENLY AN ICY FEAR GRIPS MY HEART. THERE IS SOMETHING *FAMILIAR* ABOUT THAT FIGURE. HIS *WALK*, HIS *VOICE*...



WHO...WHO ARE YOU?

DON'T YOU KNOW, SIDNEY?

I BEGIN TO RUN. I AM TERRORIZED, MY HEART BEATS IN MY CHEST LIKE A TRIP HAMMER RUN WILD. HE STUMBLES AFTER ME...



NO! NO! STAY AWAY...

I RUN THROUGH THE DESERTED WATERFRONT ALLEYS, THE PERSPIRATION POURING FROM MY FACE. BUT NO MATTER HOW FAST I RUN, THE SHUFFLING FIGURE BEHIND GAINS ON ME. AND THEN, SUDDENLY, THE ROAD ENDS. I HAVE RUN OUT ONTO A PIER...



OUR SHIP IS WAITING, SIDNEY!

OH, LORD.

HE IS ALMOST UPON ME. I STAND, FROZEN, BENEATH THE DIM LAMP AT THE PIER'S END. AND THEN I SMELL IT...THE ODOOR...THE ODOOR OF DRIFTWOOD AND ROTTING SEAWEED...THE VILE AND NAUSEATING STENCH OF DECAY...



HE REACHES OUT TO ME, AND I INHALE THE FOULNESS OF HIS AURA, THE PUTRID REEK OF HIS FETOR. AND THEN THE LIGHT ABOVE US FALLS UPON HIS FACE.



CHOKO UNGLE...

THE FOG CLOSES IN ABOUT ME...FIRST GREY, THEN BLACK...AND I SLIP INTO THE MERCIFUL ESCAPE OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS, FALLING TO THE ROTTED BRINE-IMPREGNATED PIER BOARDS.



THE SOUND OF THE SEA AWAKENS ME. IT IS A HOLLOW ROARING SOUND, LIKE THE SOUND YOU HEAR WHEN YOU PLACE A SEA SHELL TO YOUR EAR. I STIR, SIT UP, AND LOOK ABOUT ME...

GOOD LORD! I'M ON A SHIP!



THE SKY ABOVE ME AS BLACK AS TAR, AND AN INKY GREEN SEA, CALM AND STILL, STRETCHES AWAY TOWARD IT. I STAND ON THE DECK AND I CALL...

YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE ME BACK! HELP ME... SOMEBODY. YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE ME BACK TO LAND! I'LL PAY... I'LL PAY ANYTHING!



I LISTEN, NO SOUND. ONLY THE EMPTY FAR AWAY ROAR, ECHOING. I STAGGER ACROSS THE DECK TO THE CABIN DOOR, SCREAMING...

ANYBODY ON BOARD?  
ANYBODY?



I PULL AT THE DOOR LATCH. THE DOOR STICKS FAST. AND THEN I SEE THAT IT'S NO DOOR AT ALL, BUT MERELY A DOOR PAINTED ON THE CABIN WALL...

WHAT IS THIS? WHAT KIND OF SHIP IS THIS?



I PEEK INTO THE BLACK PORT HOLES.

ANYBODY IN THERE?



AND THEN I REALIZE THAT THEY ARE MERELY BLACK CIRCLES PAINTED TO RESEMBLE PORTHOLES.

GOOD LORD!



I AM ALONE... ALONE ON A DERELICT SHIP... A SHIP FLOATING IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE... WITH FAKE CABINS AND PAINTED PORT HOLES AND DUMMY DOORS. OH, GOD... SAVE ME!





MY CRIES OF ANGUISH DRIFT INTO THE NIGHT, AND THEIR ECHOES COME BACK, TAUNTING, LAUGHING AT ME. FRANTICALLY, I PEEK OUT ACROSS THE STILL SEA TO THE GLOW IN THE EAST THAT IS THE COMING DAWN...

DAYLIGHT! PERHAPS...  
PERHAPS...



AND THEN I SEE THAT THE OCEAN BELOW ME DOES NOT MOVE. ITS CALM SWELLS HANG FROZEN, PARALYZED, A MOTIONLESS MASS THAT STRETCHES AWAY SILENTLY TO THE...THE...

THE HORIZON! IT'S ONLY A  
SHORT DISTANCE AWAY!



SUDDENLY MY BLOOD FREEZES. I SWING DOWN THE SHIP'S SIDE, BURNING MY HANDS AS I SLIDE DOWN THE HEAVY ROPE...

OH, LORD! NO! NO!



...I DASH MADLY ACROSS THE SOLID SEA, STAMPING OVER THE FROZEN WAVES...

IT CAN'T BE...



AND I REACH THE WALL...THE WALL OF GLASS THAT RISES UPWARD AROUND AND OVER MY DERELICT SHIP AND DOWN TO THE DISTANT OPPOSITE HORIZON...

GLASS! IT'S GLASS!  
OH, GOD...



I STARE OUT OF MY BOTTLE PRISON AT THE DISTANT COFFIN LOOMING IN THE DAWN LIGHT FILTERING THROUGH THE MAUSOLEUM WINDOW, AND I SEE THE STILL-DAMP CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM DRAPED UPON IT...STILL DAMP FROM THE FOG OF THE NIGHT BEFORE, AND I KNOW THAT I AM DOOMED...DOOMED TO SPEND ETERNITY ON THE DECKS OF THIS SHAM VESSEL...THIS SHIP-IN-A-BOTTLE FOREVER LOCKED BESIDE ITS MAKER'S BIER

CHUCKE...



HEH, HEH. WELL, *HIDIOTS!* THAT ABOUT CORKS UP *O.N.'S MORBID MESS-MAG* FOR THIS ISSUE. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY HUMBLE HORROR RECITATION OF *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*. IN THE MEANTIME, IF YOU WANT TO MEET MORE FIENDS LIKE YOURSELF, CORRESPOND WITH OTHER GREEPS, WEAR PINS AND PATCHES, CARRY IDENTIFICATION CARDS, FRAME CERTIFICATES, AND GENERALLY ACT THE FOOL, THEN JOIN THE *E.G. FAN-ADICT CLUB!* IF YOU WANT TO REMAIN REASONABLY SANE, DON'T DO IT!

'BYE, NOW.





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IT TAKES?**

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to your chest  
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measured in the  
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your back—make your  
legs two pillars of strength? Then  
just check what you  
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can get it in just 15 minutes  
a day—in your own home  
—or it won't cost you a  
penny!

I don't care if you are  
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how advanced of your  
present physical condi-  
tion you may be. I  
can give you a "bernal  
chest" and a vice-like  
grip. You can shoot new strength  
into your old backbone, exercise  
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cross your body as full of pep,  
vigor and red-blooded vitality  
that you won't feel there's even  
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weakness and that lazy  
feeling I'll  
wake up  
1 1/2 x 1  
sleeping energy of  
yours—and  
make it  
burn like  
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and 4 1/2 inches on  
my chest, 3 inches  
on my arms. I was  
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pated!"

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"I gained 34 lbs.  
and increased my  
chest 6 inches!"

—J. J. New York

"I gained 31 lbs.  
and 4 1/2 inches on  
my chest, 3 inches  
on my arms. I was  
never consti-  
pated!"

—J. J. New York

"I gained 31 lbs.  
and 4 1/2 inches on  
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NO. 23  
FEBRUARY



10¢

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THE OLD WITCH



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THE CRYPT-KEEPER



WRITTEN BY



GADZOOKS!  
MY JOY KNOWS  
NO BOUNDS! I  
HAVE JUST RECEIVED  
MY **E.C. FAN-ADDICT  
CLUB MEMBERSHIP  
KIT** WHICH INCLUDES  
A FULL COLOR  
7½X10½ ILLUMINATED  
**CERTIFICATE**, A STURDY  
WALLET **IDENTIFICATION  
CARD**, AN ATTRACTIVE  
EMBROIDERED  
**SHOULDER PATCH**,  
AND A STUNNING  
ANTIQUE BRONZE-  
FINISH **BAS-  
RELIEF PIN**, SO  
**WHAT!**

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SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE'S MY TWO BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY, AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

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# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! DO YOU GET YOUR GRIMY PAWS ONE ONE OF YOUR OLD MAN'S COMES, BOUGHT MY BUCK-MAR, AND NOW YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER SLIME-SUCKING FROM MY CAULDRON? HERE IN THE MOUNT OF FEAR, ENT WELL, TURN YOUR BRIDLE CUPS UNDER YOUR DOUBLE CHINS, KNOT YOUR HARPINS AROUND YOUR NOSEY REEFS, AND YOUR DELIRIUM DIETICIAN, YOUR BEETING-RESTAURATEUR, YOUR MORBID-MEMO-MARKET. THE OLD WITCH, WILL DISH OUT ANOTHER OF HER REVOLTING RECIPES. READY? GOOD! THEN HERE'S ONE WITH THE NAUSEATING NOVELETTE I CALL...

## CREEP COURSE



STELLA'S FURNISHED ROOM WASN'T VERY FAR FROM THE UNIVERSITY. IN FACT, FROM HER FRONT WINDOW, SHE COULD SEE THE TOWER OF MEMORIAL HALL, RISING ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS. SHE'D HURRIED THE NEW BLOCKS FROM THE CAMPUS, PLUNGED OPEN THE DOOR, TOSSED HER BOOKS ON A CHAIR, AND NOW SHE STOOD GAZING OUT OVER THE COLLING TOWN AND SMILING A TRANSPARENT SMILE.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATION? YOU'VE ONE COURSE I WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY MORE!



STELLA TURNED AND GRIMED AT HER REFLECTION IN THE FULL-LENGTH MIRROR ON THE CLOSET DOOR. SHE STIED HER BALLETINA SHOES, HER FULL BUSTIER TIGHT-FITTING SWEATER, AND SHE SHOOK HER HEAD...



OH-UH! NO SURF THIS OUTFIT IS GREAT FOR PERFORMING A PROFF'S INTEREST DURING THE DATE, BUT NOW THAT I'VE BEEN INVITED TO AN EYE-MIND SESSION...

STELLA SWUNG OPEN THE CLOSET AND UNHOOKED HER VERY BEST STRAPLESS FROM THE RACK...



...IT'S TIME TO ROLL. OH, STELLA! OUT THE BIG GUNS! SAY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

IT WAS MITZ, STELLA'S ROOMMATE. SHE CROSSED THE SMALL ROOM AND FINGERED THE EVENING GOWN...



GOT A HEAVY DATE TONIGHT, MITZ?

IT ISN'T A BLIND DATE, I HOPE. I WOULDN'T POOL AROUND WITH ANY BLIND DATE THESE DAYS!

STELLA SCOFFED...

OH, CUT IT, MITZ! SO A FEW STUDENTS DISAPPEAR FROM THE CAMPUS. IS THAT ANY REASON TO START UGLY RUMORS ABOUT MARRIAGES AND MURDERERS AND STUFF LIKE THAT?!

I DIDN'T START THE RUMORS, STELLA. I'M JUST REPEATING WHAT I HEARD. WHO'S THE GUY?



WELL... IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL! IT'S... PROFESSOR FINLEY!

PROFESSOR FINLEY? THE 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' TEACHER? ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? WHAT'S AN OLD CREEPY?



HE MAY BE AN OLD CREEPY, MITZ, BUT IF I DON'T PASS 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION', I DON'T GRADUATE. AND WHAT I KNOW ABOUT ANCIENT CIVILIZATION WOULDN'T FILL A THIMBLE.

OH, I GET IT! GOMMA VAMP 'EM, EH?



GOMMA TRY? DON'T FORGET! NOT A WORD! I PROMISED HIM I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL.

WELL, HAVE FUN, STELLA. I GOTTA RUN. THE BAND'S OVER AT MORRIS'S. WE'RE GOMMA HAVE A JAM SESSION. DON'T WORRY! YOUR SECRETS SAFE WITH ME...





MITZI LEFT AND STELLA STRETCHED OUT ON THE BED SHE SMILED IMPULSIVELY...



POOR PROFESSOR VINLEY! IF HE ONLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS LETTING HIMSELF IN FOR!

IT WAS GOING TO BE SO SIMPLE. STELLA'D PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY. EVER SINCE THAT FIRST WEEK... WHEN THEY'D COVERED EGYPTIAN CULTURE AND SHE'D KNOWN SHE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PASS THAT COURSE, WHAT WITH GREECE AND ROME YET TO COME... SHE'D WORKED ON PROFESSOR VINLEY. AND THIS AFTERNOON, SHE'D FINALLY SUCCEEDED...



OH, ER, MISS SHARP, I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU AFTER MY LECTURE.

OF COURSE, PROFESSOR.

SHE'S BEEN SO CAREFUL ABOUT HER MAKE-UP. SHE'D WORN HER MOST FLATTERING SWEATERS. SHE'D SAT CROSS-LEGGED IN CLASS TILL HER MUSCLES HAD ACHED. AND HE'D FINALLY BITTEN...



YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, PROFESSOR?

LAST NIGHT I READ YOUR PAPER ON THE 'FALL OF ROME' MISS SHARP. FRANKLY, I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU'VE GAINED FROM MY LECTURES!

I...I'M A LITTLE WORRIED MYSELF, PROFESSOR. I'VE TRIED/HONESTLY, I'VE TRIED! BUT I JUST HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD...



I THOUGHT I'D MADE THE CAUSAS AND EFFECTS QUITE CLEAR, MISS SHARP. I FEEL TERRIBLE! HAVE I COVERED TOO MUCH GROUND TOO FAST FOR YOU?



PERHAPS... IF YOU REVIEWED IT FOR ME, PROFESSOR... SAY... SOME EVENING?



THAT... ER... THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY APPROPRIATE, MISS SHARP! THE FACULTY PROMISES ON FRATERNIZATION...



OH! I... I SEE! WELL... I... I WOULDN'T WANT TO GET YOU INTO ANY KIND OF TROUBLE...

ER. PERHAPS... IF NO ONE KNEW... IF IT WAS... SAY... OUR LITTLE SECRET... I MEAN... WELL... I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU, MISS SHARP! YOU'RE A... VERY NICE... ER... AH... SURE... COME...

HE'D BITTEN, ALL RIGHT. HE'D SUCKED IN THE BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...



OH, I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL, PROFESSOR. NOT A SOUL! THIS IS SO SWEET OF YOU! I... I COULD KISS YOU...

AH... YES... ER... WELL THEN, SHALL WE SAY... AT TEN... AT EIGHT... AT MY HOUSE? YOU'LL... ER... MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT SEEN!

STELLA YAWNED AND STRETCHED. SHE LOOKED AT HER WATCH...



PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE OLD FASHIONED MONSTROSITIES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN VERY STYLISH. STELLA LIFTED THE HUGE DOOR KNOCKER. THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED DOWN LONG CORRIDORS AND UP STEEP STAIRCASES AND DIED AWAY IN DARK CORNERS WITHIN. THE DOOR SQUEAKED OPEN...



STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR, MOVING LITELY, TRYING TO LOOK VERY DESIRABLE.



SHE WATCHED HIS READY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES. "ANCIENT CIVILIZATION" WAS ONE COURSE SHE WASN'T GOING TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT...



ALL RIGHT... ER... OH, WHAT A LOVELY HOUSE! STELLA, COME... COME INTO THE LIBRARY! EVERYTHING IS SO... SO... INTERESTING!



STELLA HID HER REAL FEELINGS. THE *IMPRESSION* OF THE HOUSE WAS WORSE THAN THE *SURPRISE*. THERE WERE STATUES WHEREVER ONE LOOKED... MARBLE BUSTS OF ROMAN EMPERORS... FULL LENGTH POSES OF MIGHTY ROMAN WARRIORS... ROMAN POETS, WRITERS, MATHEMATICIANS. COLUMNS LINED THE WALLS, BETWEEN WHICH WERE BURNING PAINTINGS OF ANCIENT ROMAN SCENES.



PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A SMALL DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL. HE MOTIONED STELLA DOWN THE STEPS.



STELLA DESCENDED THE STEPS SLOWLY, THINKING TO HERSELF:

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS  
THROW MY ARMS  
AROUND HIM AND  
KISS HIM AND HE'S  
A DEAD DUCK!  
HE WON'T DARE  
FLUNK M.E. POOR  
PROFESSOR FINLEY!



AT THE BOTTOM OF THE  
STAIRS WAS ANOTHER DOOR...  
A MASSIVE OAK DOOR.

OPEN IT, STELLA! SOON,  
PROFESSOR



STELLA OPENED IT. PROFESSOR  
FINLEY PUSHED STELLA SPRAWLED  
THROUGH...

PROFESSOR! HEH, HEH, HEH!



THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT BEHIND STELLA. THE  
LOCK SNAPPED, PROFESSOR FINLEY'S MANIACAL  
LAUGH ECHOED THROUGH...

PROFESSOR. MY GOD!  
WHAT IS THIS? LET  
ME OUT!

HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH!



FOOTSTEPS FADED AWAY UP THE COLLAR STAIRS. STELLA  
SCREAMED AFTER THEM. SUDDENLY, STELLA'S BLOOD  
FROZE. SHE HEARD THE LOW-THROATED GROWL...

WHO... WHO'S  
THERE?

HE'S GOT  
ANOTHER  
ONE!

YOU  
POOR  
RID!



STELLA PEERED INTO THE GLOOM. SHE SEEMED TO BE IN  
SOME SORT OF HUGE ROOM. THERE WERE OTHER FIGURES  
Huddled TOGETHER IN THE CORNERS OF THE FLOOR...

WHO... WHO ARE  
YOU?

HE'S DEAD! HE TRAPPED US  
THE SAME WAY HE TRAPPED YOU!  
THIS IS HIS GOLDEN AGE! SEE?  
SEE THE CAGES...



AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAVEMOUS CELLAR  
CHAMBER, STELLA COULD SEE THE BARS... AND  
BEHIND THEM, THE BURNING YELLOW EYES AND THE  
GLEAMING TEETH...

HE'S GOT A LION  
BACK THERE... AND  
A TIGER...

A GORILLA!  
WE'RE TO BE  
HIS CHRISTIAN  
MARTYRS!

OH,  
NO!  
NO!



STELLA'S EYES WERE BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS NOW. SHE COULD SEE THE OTHERS... YOUNG GIRLS LIKE HERSELF... SHINING IN THE DARK DAMPNES. SHE RECOGNIZED THEM. THEY WERE STUDENTS... THE STUDENTS THAT HAD GRABBED...



PROFESSOR FINLEY ENTERED A DRAPED BOX. HE HAD OSCARRED HIS DRESSING ROOM AND NOW STOOD PROUDLY IN A WHITE ROMAN Toga, A WREATH OF LAUREL ON HIS HEAD.



STELLA AND THE OTHER GIRLS HUGGLED TOGETHER, WHIMPERING, AS THE MAD MAN RAISED HIS WINE GLASS.



BEHIND HIS SCREENED BOX, PROFESSOR FINLEY PRESSED A BUTTON... THEN ANOTHER. STELLA SCREAMED, THE BARS OF THE CAGE ROLLED OPEN...



THE LION SNARLED. THE TIGER PADDED TOWARD THEM. THE BOVILLA POUNDED HIS CHEST, WADDLING OUT OF HIS CAGE. THE CELLAR RESOUNDED WITH THE HYSTERICAL SHRIEKING OF THE HELPLESS GIRLS.



SUDDENLY THE CELLAR RESONATED WITH A RECORDED TRUMPET FANFARE. THE LIGHTS WENT ON. STELLA BLINKED. THE SAND FLOOR OF THE CELLAR WAS STAINED RED. IN THEIR CAGES, THE ANIMALS ROARED PROOGLING HUNGRILY.



AND AS THE SHRIEKS AND SCREAMS RODE TO A CRESCENDO, HARMONIZING IN A HORROR SYMPHONY WITH THE ROARS OF THE BLOOD-STARVED BEASTS, THE MANIC MUNCHER GRAPES AND STRUMMED HIS LYRE AND WHISPERED THE RIPPING... THE TEARING... THE VERY DEATH SCENE HIS MANIC COUNTERPART HAD WATCHED NINETEEN CENTURES AGO.



STELLA SCREAMED. MITZI SHOOK HER AGAIN.  
STELLA SAT UP, WIDE-EYED...



STELLA CLUNG TO HER ROOMMATE, SOBING...



PROFESSOR FINLEY!  
HE HAD THREE  
GIRLS THAT DIS-  
APPEARED FROM  
THE CAMPUS IN HIS  
CELLAR! AND Z...



PROFESSOR  
FINLEY!  
THAT OLD  
CREEN HE  
WOULDN'T  
HURT A FLY!  
IT SURE WAS  
A DREAM, BABY!



SAY, DON'T  
YOU HAVE A  
DATE WITH  
HIM?

OH... GOLLY!  
WHAT TIME  
IS IT?



STELLA LEAPED FROM THE BED...

DREAM OR NO DREAM... I'M  
GOING TO GET THAT SHEEPER!  
SEE YOU...

GOOD LUCK,  
HONEY...



SHE HURRIED DOWN DARK STREETS TO PROFESSOR  
FINLEY'S HOUSE.

IT'S VERY SIMPLE. MITZI SUGGESTED MY  
DREAM TO ME WHEN SHE TOLD ME NOT TO GO ON  
ANY BLIND DATES BECAUSE OF THOSE DIS-  
APPEARANCES... AND I, IN TURN, IN MY DREAM,  
ATTRIBUTED THEM TO PROFESSOR FINLEY...  
WHICH, OF COURSE, IS RIDICULOUS.



PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WASN'T AT ALL AS STELLA HAD DREAMED IT. THERE WAS NO DOORKNOCKER. INSTEAD, SOFT CHIMES SANG FROM WITHIN AS SHE TOUCHED THE BUTTON.

STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR. THIS WAS NO DREAM NOW? THIS WAS IT?

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES, ANCIENT CIVILIZATION 'WAS ONE' COURSE...



MISS SHARP: YES, PROFESSOR! IT'S ME!



WHY, MISS SHARP? YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP? ON, THEN? IT'S JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING I PICKED UP FOR DOCKING. LIKE IT?



COME WITH ME, MISS SHARP! WE'LL GET STARTED... CALL ME STELLA, PROFESSOR!

PROFESSOR FINLEY LED STELLA DOWN A LONG HALL, TO A HUGE DOOR. HE DIVING IT OPEN...

WELL, THANK GOODNESS, PROFESSOR! OH, NO, MISS SHARP. I WOULD HAVE DIED IF I SAW ANY ROMAN STATUES OR PAINTINGS OR THE LIKE... ER, STELLA! ROMAN CIVILIZATION NEVER REALLY INTERESTED ME...



THE LOCK SNAPPED BEHIND THEM. STELLA LOOKED AROUND, RELIEVED. THE WALLS BORE MONUMENTAL AND STRANGE DRAWINGS. AT ONE END OF THE ROOM STOOD THREE... THREE... STELLA GASPED.



MUMMY CASES? THREE OF THEM? YES, STELLA! EGYPTIAN CULTURE IS MY FORTY! I AM PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE BURIAL PRACTICES OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS...

STELLA BACKED OFF. PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A CABINET AND DROVE FORTH AN EGYPTIAN PRIEST'S MANTLE. HE DROPPED HIS ROBE, PLACED THE MANTLE ON HIS HEAD, AND CAME TOWARD HER... THE YARDS AND YARDS OF BURIAL SAFFT TRAILING BEHIND HIM.



IT'S AN INTERESTING PROCESS, STELLA. MUMMIFICATION... NOT! NOT! CHORE!

YES, YES! WELL, KIDDIES, THAT ABOUT WRAPS IT UP... FOR STELLA, THAT IS. PROFESSOR FINLEY HAS FOUR MUMMY CASES NOW, AND THERE ARE FOUR GIRLS MISSING FROM THE CAMPUS... STRANGE THING ABOUT 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' STUDENTS. THEY EITHER FLUNK OUT, DROP OUT, OR... WELL, HE... DIES OUT. NOW, THE MAINT-KEEPER BRAYS WITH HIS BONY STORY! I'LL SEE YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER OF MY BONY FAINT TALES. INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU HAVEN'T JOINED THE E.C. FAR-ABOUT CLUB... WHY FIGHT IT? IT'S BIGGER THAN BOTH OF US! DID YOU LATER?

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEN, HEN! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO SAYER YOUR TIMBERS. YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO PRESENT ANOTHER PIECE OF PUTRID PROSE FROM MY CREEPY COLLECTION OF TERROR-TOMES. THIS SCREAM-SELECTION OUGHT TO GHIIL YOUR WAFERY BLOOD! I CALL IT...

## NO SILVER ATOLL!

WHEN WE BOARDED THE TRANS-PACIFIC AIRLINER IN SAN FRANCISCO, CLARK AND I WERE PERFECT STRANGERS. HE CHOSE THE SEAT BESIDE ME AND WE BEGAN TO TALK. BY HAWAII, WE WERE FRIENDS. BY WAKE ISLAND, WE WERE MORE THAN FRIENDS. BY GUAM, I WAS IN LOVE AND KNEW IT. AND WHEN THE ENGINE CAUGHT FIRE SOMEWHERE SOUTH-EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE ONLY TERROR...THE ONLY FEAR I HAD...WAS NOW THAT I'D FOUND CLARK, I WAS GOING TO LOSE HIM...



I REMEMBER THE STEWARDESS STUMBLING UP AND DOWN THE AISLE, COMFORTING US, REASSURING US, AND THE SCREAMING WIND OF THE WIND OUTSIDE MIXING WITH THE SHRIEKS OF THE PASSENGERS ABOVE AS OUR PLANE DROVE SEAWARD. AND I REMEMBER HOW I TOOK CLARK'S HAND AND HELD IT TO MY TRAVELING LIPS...



THE PACIFIC CAME UP TO MEET US, BLUE AND VAST AND ROLLING, AND THE MOMENTS BEFORE WE HIT WERE ETERNITIES. THEN, THE SUDDEN SHOCK! THE SPRAY EXPLODING UPWARD AROUND US! THE ISSUES OF THE PLANING ENGINE AS THE SEA WATER ENVELOPED IT...



THE PLANE WENT DOWN MORE FIRST IN A MATTER OF MINUTES. I OBSERVED AS I WATCHED THE TAIL SECTION SINK SLOWLY BENEATH THE CHOPPY WIND.

HOURS LATER, WE PULLED OUR RAFTS UP ON A SPUME-LINED SLIMY SHORE. FOUL-SMELLING DRIFTWOOD AND BARKING DEARDED COVERED THE NARROW STEAMING BEACH.

AFTER WE'D CLEARED A CAMPSITE, CAPTAIN MILLER CALLED US ALL TOGETHER.

"WHAT ISLAND IS THAT, CAPTAIN?"

"I DON'T KNOW! THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF ISLANDS IN THIS AREA... MANY UNCHARTED!"

"I THOUGHT THESE PACIFIC ATOLLS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE LITTLE PARADISES."

"ONLY IN FANCY FOLDERS."

"NOW, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'RE GOING TO BE HERE... IT MAY BE A WEEK... IT MAY BE SIX MONTHS. EVENTUALLY, WE'LL BE RESCUED. THIS IS NEAR THE SHIPPING LANE. IN ANY CASE, OUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON EVERYONE'S COOPERATION!"



THERE IS PLENTY OF **FRUIT** GROWING ON THE ISLAND, AND PLENTY OF **FISH** IN THE LAGOON SO WE WON'T STARVE. WE'VE GOT **ONE BUN, ONE BOX OF SHELLS, AND A MEDICAL KIT** WITH ALL THE **DRIFTWOOD** AROUND, WE CAN BUILD A **SIGNAL FIRE**, AND IF A **PLANE** OR A **SHIP** COMES BY, WE'LL BE ABLE TO **LIGHT IT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION**. SO, ALL IN ALL, OUR SITUATION COULD BE A **LOT WORSE**.

SO THERE WE WERE, ELEVEN HUMAN BEINGS MAROONED ON AN UNINHABITED TROPICAL ISLAND. THAT FIRST NIGHT, AS CLARK AND I SAT BESIDE EACH OTHER AND LISTENED TO THE SCAMALING TROPICAL BIRDS OFF IN THE DENSE OVERGROWTH, I NOTICED...



"WHAT'S **WROTH**, CLARK? YOU LOOK **WORRIED**."

"I, I AM, RUTH. WE'VE GOT TO BE **RESCUED** SOON. WE'VE JUST GOT TO."





A WEEK WENT BY. NO PLANE OR SHIP CAME NEAR OUR ISLAND. AND STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. ONE OF OUR PARTY WAS A THIEF.



THAT'S RIGHT. MY **RING** WAS STOLEN LAST NIGHT. I DEMAND ITS RETURN.

I DON'T KNOW WHO THE GUILTY PARTY IS, MR. KUBLESKI, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST TO FIND OUT.

EVERY NIGHT, SOMETHING ELSE WAS STOLEN FROM ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR GROUP...



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, CAPTAIN! MY **SELF-BOOZLE** WAS OF LITTLE VALUE. WHO WOULD WANT TO STEAL A **SELF-BOOZLE**?

ONE OF US IS A CLEPTOMANIAC. I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO POST A WATCH. TWO OF US AT A TIME WILL STAND AWAKE WHILE THE OTHERS SLEEP. THIS PETTY THIEVERY MUST BE STOPPED.

CAPTAIN MILLER FUMLED THROUGH HIS POCKETS...



I'LL FLIP A COIN TO SEE WHO... WHO... THAT'S FUNNY! I WAS **PAUSE** I HAD SOME CHANGE. ANYBODY GOT A **QUARTER**?

I HAVE, CAPTAIN! I... I... THAT'S STRANGE.

ONE BY ONE, WE ALL SEARCHED OUR POCKETS AND PURSES. IT WAS INCREDIBLE...



I HAD PLENTY OF CHANGE. I REMEMBER! NOW, I'VE ONLY A **PENNY** AND TWO **NICKELS**.

ALL OF MY **DIMES** AND **QUARTERS** ARE GONE... STOLEN!

THE THIEF, WHOMEVER HE OR SHE WAS, HAD RIFLED THROUGH EVERYONE'S CLOTHES... PROBABLY WHILE WE SLEPT, BUT THE CURIOUS THING WAS...



WE'D ONLY TAKEN **DIMES** AND **QUARTERS** AND **HALF-DOLLARS**!

ALL MY **BILLS** ARE HERE. A **SILVER DOLLAR** I HAD IS GONE. MY **PENNIES** AND **NICKELS** ARE STILL HERE!

MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS GASPED...



MR. DAWSON, WHAT WAS YOUR **SELF-BOOZLE** MADE OF?

**SURE!**

AND MY **RING**? MY **RING** WAS **SILVER** TOO!

OH, IT SEEMS OUR **THIEF** IS ONLY INTERESTED IN STEALING **SILVER**! BUT WHY?

WE FOUND OUT WHY! ONE NIGHT AT THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK, I WAS AWAKENED TO THE BLOOD-CURLING SOUND OF SOMEONE SHRIEKING IN PAIN.



**YAAAAHHHHH!**

GOOD LORD! WHAT WAS THAT?



IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I SCARCELY LEFT CLARK'S SIDE. I WAS FRIGHTENED AND HE WAS THE ONLY ONE I COULD TURN TO. . .



CLARK! NEXT WEEK IS THE FULL MOON AGAIN! WHAT WILL WE DO? WHAT IF IT STRIKES AGAIN!

I'LL PROTECT YOU, HOMER! DON'T WORRY!

AND THEN, IT HAPPENED AGAIN. FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE FIRST MURDER, ON THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON, A HORRIBLE SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS OUR TROPIC ISLAND. . .



AND WHEN WE GOT TO MISS KIRBY'S LEAN-TO, WE FOUND HER PALE WHITE BODY TORN AND SHREDDED AND STREAKED RED WITH BLOOD. . .



CHUCK. . .

THE WEREWOLF HAS STRUCK AGAIN!

CAPTAIN MILLER SHOUTED:

ALL RIGHT! WE'LL FIND OUT WHO IT IS! WHO'S MISSING? QUICKLY! LOOK AROUND! WHO ISN'T HERE?

DON'T BOTHER LOOKING, CAPTAIN! IT IS TOO LATE! ONCE THE WEREWOLF'S HUNGER FOR HUMAN FLESH IS SATISFIED, HE RETURNS ONCE MORE TO HIS NORMAL SELF.



MR. KURLESKI LOOKED AROUND. . .

HE IS NO COUNT RIGHT HERE AMONG US AT THE PRESENT MOMENT!

ARE THERE ANY TESTS, MR. KURLESKI... ANY WAYS OF TELLING WHO IS A WEREWOLF?



DURING THE PERIOD PRECEDING THE RISE OF THE FULL MOON, THERE ARE VERY FEW, CLARK! WEREWOLVES ARE MORTALLY AFRAID OF GARLIC. IN THE OLD COUNTRY, MANY PEASANTS STILL HANG GARLIC ON THEIR DOORS AT FULL MOON TIME. AS THE FULL MOON RISES, THE WEREWOLVES' EYES TURN RED, A PENTAGRAM IS SEEN ON THE PALM OF HIS INTENDED VICTIM, HIS EYEBROWS MERGE. . . HIS FACE GROWS HANKY. . . HIS TEETH LENGTHEN. . .



AND THEN, AT EXACTLY THE MOMENT OF THE FULL, A JOK, THE TRANSFORMATION IS COMPLETE. HE IS, IN FACT, A VERITABLE HUMAN WOLF.

LOMO! WHERE CAN WE GET ENOUGH SILVER TO FASHION A SILVER BULLET? WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY THIS GOD-AWFUL CREATURE. . .



WITH MISS KIRBY'S DEATH, I BECAME  
HUMGRAN OF THE MEDICAL KIT,  
ALTHOUGH MY TRAINING CONSISTED  
ONLY OF A SHORT NURSE'S AIDE  
COURSE. DURING THE WAR, I NEV-  
ERTHELESS MANAGED TO PATCH UP  
THE VARIOUS CUTS AND BRUISES  
SUFFERED BY THE MEMBERS OF OUR  
PARTY. . .



ONE DAY I WAS WALKING DOWN  
ALONG THE BEACH WHEN I NOTICED  
A CRATE THAT HAD WASHED ASHORE.  
I READ THE RADIOSTENCIL MARK-  
INGS. . .



I WANTED TO CLARK WHO WAS UP AT  
THE CAMP. . .



CLARK CAME ON THE RUN. I POINTED TO THE  
ROTTED CRATE... LAUGHING. . .



CLARK RECOILED IN HORROR. HE WALKED AWAY...  
MUTTERING. . .



HE WALKED ON UP TO CAMP, NEVER ONCE LOOKING  
BACK. I KICKED AT THE CRATE FURIOUSLY. . .



THE ROTTED CRATE FELL APART. THE CANS ROLLED OUT  
OVER THE SAND. I PICKED ONE UP. THE STAMPED LETTERS  
DENOTING ITS CONTENTS WAS STILL LEGIBLE. . .



I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT. I KNEW I WAS WRONG. CLARK... THE WEREWOLF! HOW COULD IT BE? I LOVED CLARK. I WANTED TO MARRY HIM WHEN ALL THIS WAS OVER. I HAD TO BE SURE. I WENT BACK TO MY LEAN-TO...



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMED IN UPON HIS FACE AS HE CHARGED... AS HIS EYEBROWS NERSED...



EXACTLY...

I OPENED THE MEDICAL KIT. I STUDIED THE CALENDAR. TONIGHT... TONIGHT WAS TO BE THE FULL MOON. I STARTED TO CLOSE THE MEDICAL KIT, WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT MY EYE...



OF COURSE! HOW STUPID OF ME NOT TO HAVE THOUGHT OF THIS BEFORE!

...AS HIS EYES TURNED RED AND HIS TEETH LENGTHENED AND THE HAIR GREW OUT OF HIS FACE...



I HAVE TO!

...AND HE GARGLED AND SPANG AT ME, Slobbering...



THAT NIGHT I WENT TO CLARK'S LEAN-TO. HE LOOKED UP AT ME SADLY...



HOW DID YOU HAVE TO FIND OUT? WE COULD HAVE BEEN SO HAPPY TOGETHER! YOU'RE GOING NOW... I KNOW! CLARK! LOOK! MY FACE! THE PENTAGON! HAPPY TOGETHER! YOU'RE GOING NOW... TO KILL ME!



... AND I PLUNGED THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE INTO HIS CHEST.

AGH!

CAPTAIN MILLER CAME AND LOOKED AT CLARK'S DEAD BODY LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT AND THEN HE STARED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY AS I HANDED HIM THE EMPTY HYPODERMIC I'D FILLED WITH SILVER HYDRATE FROM THE BOTTLE I'D FOUND IN THE MEDICAL KIT...



IT... IT WORKED... BOB... LIKE A SILVER BULLET? YOU CAN TELL... BOB... MR. KURLESZ!

GOOD LORD!

HEY, HEY! THAT'S JUSTY'S PARK, KIDDER, EXACTLY AS SHE TOLD IT TO ME. NOW COME SHE MEET ME, YOU ARE? SO WHO DO YOU THINK RESCUED HER AND THE OTHER CRUISES? HATCH! ME? YOU SEE, I WAS TAKING A LITTLE CRUISE THIS SUMMER ON MY SHORT SHIP AND... WELL, THAT'S ANOTHER STORY! I'LL SAVE IT TILL SOME OTHER TIME. NOW



IT'S TIME TO GLOBE UP THE KALEID OF HORROR FOR THIS ISSUE OF O.R.'S MAG, AND TURN YOU BACK TO HER. SO, 'EYE, NOW. WHO... AS THE UNDER-TAKER SAID WHEN HE PAINTED HIS COFFIN-CANT RED, "THIS IS A HEARSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR!"



# BREEZE!



With the blueprint carefully folded in his breast pocket, Krieger stepped out of the Design Room. He glanced up and down the broad corridor, no one had noticed him. Another few minutes, Krieger thought, and he'd have successfully stolen the plans for one of America's most jealously guarded military secrets!

Through a dark marked Test Section, Krieger passed . . . his hand brushing his coat and the bulge in his pocket. The plans would be on their way overseas in less than 8 hours. Krieger glanced . . . before another instant his notice's secret agents would be examining the blueprints of the top-secret B-112 jet bomber! Stealing plans from a Tuskegee airplane factory was child's play, Krieger reflected . . . to use the Americans' own phrase, it was a BREEZE!

A uniformed guard appeared to be watching him, Krieger realized with dismay. The man was crouching over from the far end of the corridor. Krieger looked about nervously . . . he had been detected somehow! Opposite him were a large pair of doors with a sign reading, RESTRICTED KEEP OUT! If the guard came closer, Krieger thought, he'd make a dash for it. These doors would provide him with a few minutes' breathing time . . . he'd manage to think of a way out of this dilemma! A way to pass on the plans to a colleague, even if they got him!

"Hey, mister!" the guard was bellowing at him now. Krieger darted toward the huge doors, tugged hastily and was able to open the heavy mass. Perceptive standing out like a spotlight on his hurried leave, Krieger slipped the doors shut behind him and heard the lock click into place. He'd have to

think fast.

The room was of enormous proportions, Krieger noted as he slid his hand into the secret pouch and pulled out the blueprint. It was some kind of gaspatorium hall . . . thousands of steel cables ran from floor to ceiling far overhead. He'd hide the plans in one of the struts, then pass the word into his colleague after he was released. It would be a breeze . . .

A roaring sound alarmed Krieger, he stepped to his trunk and turned toward the source of noise. A geyser beam completely dominated the far wall . . . it was stirring up a frightful wind!

Krieger felt the full shortening blast the next second. It lifted him off the floor, tore his coat from his body in a thousand tatters and hurled him headlong toward one of the sloping side walls. He crashed with amazing force against the struts, was aware that the back of his head and hands had been sliced off in bloody streaks. He tried groggily to stand, but the turmoil was too much, once again he was whisked from the floor and catapulted against the marooned struts. A stabbing pain slashed between his eyes . . . one of his arms was being savagely torn loose in socket by the swirling wind.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I'd tried to stop him," the bewildered guard said in the chief of the Security Section. "He seemed to be sane. But before I could get to him he went to there . . ."

The guard pointed to the double doors marked: RESTRICTED KEEP OUT! "Went into the High-Velocity Wind Tunnel!"

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(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 23rd day of September, 1933.

Etienne De Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1934.)



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# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Well, here I was! It's "that time of the year again" . . . we and my idiot editors had a big battle. They wanted to cut my column to make room for the stupid "who-owns-what" nonsense. But we finally decided to stick it on the next page. I threatened to cut all their supply of clippings! . . . the stinkers. They turned green! So now, without further ado, let's dig into the mail-bag and compile the latest additions to the E.C. Horror Kit Parade, as submitted by the following twisted little twisters: E. and E. Noble of Chicago, IL; Carole Jean Park of Three Rivers, Mass.; Leonard E. Cohen of Maryville, Calif.; Elmore Fogarty of Gosport, Wis.; Jerry Grunwald of Coney, N.Y.; Jerry Hama of New Castle, Pa.; Michael Prestigiacchi and Tom DeDeo of Newark, N.J.; Sally Hedges and friends of Fort Clayton, Carol Zone, and J. J. Spies of N.Y.C.

DO NOT CRIMINATE ME, OH MY DARLING  
I'VE GOT YOUR BLOOD TO KEEP ME WARM  
I'LL BE DOWN TO EAT YOU IN A TANT, YUMMY!  
I SAW MOMMY EATING SANYA'S CLAWS  
IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOWN  
DON'T DRAIN ME  
MY OLD KENTUCKY CRONE  
MADE IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD  
DON'T SHT UNDER THE APPLE TREE  
JUST ANOTHER CRONER  
THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR YOUR SONYE EYES  
I DON'T CARE IF THE SUN DON'T SHINE  
IT EAT MY LOVENS IN THE EVINING TIME!  
CUT ME UP A LITTLE CROON  
TANSTU IN ME  
I'M PUENIG OVER THE FOUR STUFFS OF DOVER  
SNOWFIED IN THE OLD RIGER STREAM  
I WILL BREAK YOUR BACK AGAIN, KATHLEEN  
SOMEBODY STOLE MY GUTS  
A-CRUNCHING WE WILL GO  
I'M SITTING THE TOP OF A GAIL

Joe Malone of Brooklyn and Dean Voorhees of Los Angeles suggest the following wacky wackies to write for those disgusting editors:

EDDIE SQUISHES  
DINAH CORE  
LES FALL NEARER  
MEL FORGEE ME  
ETHEL MURDER MAN  
ROSEMARY SLOW ME  
JOE EYES

Patric Peery Daps, Society Sundry of Willow Grove, Pa. slashes off this one to the face of 'My Bountie Lies Over the Green':

PAUL, PLEASE

My stomach is in a commotion,  
My head a thumping over the soil . . .  
I don't want to taste up the cream  
So somebody bring me a pool!

Bobby McMahon of Decatur, IL pens this prize:

When a vampire goes out at night  
He sure don't go out to fly a kite!  
He goes out searching, and then he drinks  
And leaves his victim with empty veins!

or  
Down to the valley, the valley so red  
Hang your neck over and I'll cut off your head

Shan Greenstein of Detroit, Mich. sends us this parody:

Mary had a little lamb  
It went with her to school  
One day the lamb came home alone  
It really was a ghoul!

John Chapoy of Houston, Texas dresses up this delicious delight:

Blood and guts all over the street  
And me without a spoon to eat!

And now for some defenses from the not-so-entire.

Dear Old Crone,

I and my friend have a boast to make. By the time this is printed, I will have 100 E.C.'s, and my friend will have 75! I think we have two of the largest collections of E.C. copies in the United States. If there are any people who have more, I would like to hear from them.

Martina Benzel  
Matt Flynn  
1419 Rosemary  
Columbus, Mo.

This sounds like a trap.

Dear Old Wink,

In always seemed kind of strange that everytime anything happens in your books, somebody says, "Good Lord!" I thought it was kind of silly, but it seems that recently everyone's been saying it.

Paul Cummins  
Selma Kansas

Power of the press, Paul.

Dear Old Galy,

Every month, I look forward to the story drawn by Ghastly Graham Ingels. I think he's awed because his characters look like my relatives.

Mary Little  
N.Y.C.

You poor lardhoggiest kid.

And now for the advertising. Oh, ya ain't got no money, don't bother reading the rest of this lardhoggiest letter! In case you didn't catch E.C.'s two P.D. magazines while they were languishing on the newsstands the bookstore is now helping with millions of copies for you unfortunate people who missed them! And here my idiot editors got an offer for YOU! You can now obtain THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS (original subscription price 25c) or THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR (idiot) for the original price of the week . . . or the special compressed price of 1 for 35c. This is 3-D like you never saw 3-D before . . . or close! Subscriptions (in 3-D) for the HAUNT OF FEAR will lower your discolored worth by one buck for eight full issues. The address for 3-D orders, subscription orders, and the other stuff like what you been reading in it:

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HERE'S THE LATEST IN MY FAIRY TALE DEBUNKING CAMPAIGN, KIDDIES. THIS IS THE **REAL** SCOP... THE **TRUE** FACTS BEHIND THE NAUTICATING NONSENSE THAT YOU'VE READ AL...

## HANSEL and GRETEL!



I'VEE, ACTUALLY, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE AND TWO KIDS **WEREN'T** SO **BAD OFF**. THEY **WEREN'T** SO **POOR** THAT THEY **COULDN'T BUY FOOD** LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IN FACT, THE OLD MAN WAS DOING **ALL RIGHT**, WHO WITH THE **HOUSING BOOM** AND THE **R.E.S** BACK FROM THE **CRUSADES**. THE **REAL** TROUBLE WAS...

**GODD LORR, WIFE! THEM KIDDS! THEY'RE EATING AGAIN!**

**THAT'S ALL THEY DO IS EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT! YOU'LL HAVE TO INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE. I JUST CAN'T MANAGE WITH THEM EATING LIKE THAT!**

CHOMP... CHOMP...

CHOMP... CHOMP...



**STOP WITH THE 'INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE' ROUTINE! I'M HANDING OVER MY WHOLE PAY BAG NOW. WHY, I STILL OWE A FEW DUCATS ON MY NEW AKE. EVERY TIME THE COLLECTOR COMES, I GOT TO OWEAT....**

**...AND THERE'S AN INSTALLMENT DUE ON THE NEW WASH TUB. OH, WHAT WILL WE DO?**

CHOMP... CHOMP... **WEAR DIRTY CLOTHES! CHOMP...**

**YOU SHUT UP AND EAT!**

**NO! DON'T EAT! TALK! DON'T EAT! TALK! SAY SOMETHING!**

**HANSEL! OUR PAR-ENTS SEEM TO BE IN DISAGREEMENT AS TO... CHOMP WHAT OUR BEHAVIOR... SLURP... SHOULD BE!**

**GRATIFIED UP... CHOMP... PAR-ENTS!**



GET THE PICTURE, KIDDIES? ACTUALLY THERE TWO BRATS WERE EATING THEIR FOLKS OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME... SO ONE NIGHT...



WE GOTTA GET RID OF 'EM!  
WE JUST GOTTA! THAT'S  
ALL! SUPPER TONIGHT  
WAS THE LAST STRAW...  
THE LAST STRAW!

THE LAST STRAW?  
GOOD'S HAVEN'T  
HAD A GOOD  
STEAK IN YEARS.  
ALL THE TIME,  
THEY EAT STEAK...  
I'AT STRAW!  
NOW... NO MORE  
STRAW, EVEN!

NOW, DON'T GET EXCITED... I GOT  
A SUGGESTION! WHAT SAY I TAKE  
'EM OUT INTO THE WOODS AND  
DITCH 'EM? WE'D BE RID OF  
THEM! WE'D EAT AGAIN... REAL  
FOOD... MEAT... VEGETABLES...  
YOGURT?

HUSBAND, DEAR!  
HOW COULD YOU?  
YOU SHOCK ME! I...  
I... WE'LL DO IT!  
MAYBE A TREE'LL  
FALL ON THEM...  
OR A WILD BEAST...



CHOMP... CHOMP...  
D'YA HEAR THAT?  
THEY'RE GONNA  
DITCH US, HANS.

DON'T GET  
DISPERSED,  
WIS. I'LL THINK  
OF SOMETHING  
PASS ME THE  
WORSTERSH... THE  
WORSTERSH!  
THE WORD...  
THE KETCHUP!



I'M NO FOOL. I PASSED  
MY JIMMIE FORGETT'S  
MERT BARGE TEST! I'M...  
CLEVER! I'M... I'M...  
I'M HUNGRY!



AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, WHEN THE  
WOODCUTTER LAD THE CHILDREN INTO  
THE FOREST, HANSEL WAS READY...

COME, KIDDIES!  
FOLLOW ME!  
WE WILL GO  
DEEP INTO THE  
WOODS. WE WILL  
HAVE A PIONIO.  
WE WILL...

NO WORRY, SISTER!  
AS WE PROCEED  
INTO THE IMPESTRAL  
THE IMPETR... THE  
THE THICK FOREST,  
I KEEP DROPPING  
PEBBLES!



FINALLY, DEEP IN THE FOREST, THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...

WELL THIS IS IT! THE FOREST!  
THE PAY-OFF! YOU TWO ARE  
THROUGH... DONE... WASHED  
UP! IT'S THE END OF THE  
LINE...

FATHER'S  
BEEN  
PENDING  
MIDKEY  
SPILLANEY

CHOMP...  
CHOMP...  
WE  
TOOK  
HA-VA-  
VOOM!



AND THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, THE WOODCUTTER  
DASHED OFF, LEAVING HIS TWO CHILDREN STRANDED...

IS HE GONE, CHOMP?

YES, CHOMP... REAL  
GONE!

LATER THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON CAME UP AND THE SHINY PEBBLES THAT HANSEL HAD DROPPED GLITTERED LIKE NEWLY MINTED SUNSHY TOKENS, THE CHILDREN RETRACED THEIR STEPS.



"WE'RE ALMOST HOME, HANSEL!"

"YES, I CAN HEAR THE WILD CHEERING AND HYSTERICAL LAUGHING!"

THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE HAD JUST SAT DOWN TO THEIR FIRST SQUARE MEAL IN YEARS WHEN THE DOOR TO THEIR TINY OUTCASTE BECAME OPEN.



"YUM! YUM! STEAK!"

"AND MASHED POTATOES!"

"SURPRISE!"



"OH, NO! CHOKER? MUMMY! FOOD! WE'RE STARVED! FOR THE WORSTERSH... THE WORSTERSH... THE WORSTERSH... THE KITCHEN!"

THAT NIGHT, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE PLOTTED...

"WE'VE GOT TO TRY IT AGAIN, WIFE! AND THIS TIME, WE'VE GOT TO DO THE JOB RIGHT!"

"GRAY! GRAY! NOW PASS ME THAT BONE. IT'S MY TURN TO BURN ON IT!"



AND SO, THE NEXT MORNING, THE WOODCUTTER AGAIN LED HIS DARLINGS INTO THE IMPENETRA... THE IMPENET... THE WOODS...

TODAY, WE WILL OBSERVE THE HABITS AND HABITATS OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED SAPHIRE... A BIRD OF THE WOODPECKER FAMILY NOTED FOR ITS DISTINCT PLUMAGE...

"CUT THE CORN, FOR GIVE US THE MICKY SPILLAGE... JODDING AND LET'S GET IT OVER WITH!"

"YEAH! WE'VE GOT IT!"



THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...

"THE STINKY'S RUN OUT! YOUR TIME IS UP! OR... SAY YOUR PRAYERS! ER... AH..."

"SO, ALREADY!"

"YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!"



THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF LEAVING THE TWO CHILDREN DEEP IN THE FOREST. DINKY, THEN, THOUGHT I'D SAY IMPENETRA... IMPENETRA... THICK, OH, YES...

"COME, HANSEL, SHARE MY CRUST OF BREAD SINCE YOU HAVE FORM UP YOURS INTO THAT CRUMB TO LEAVE A TRAIL FOR US TO FOLLOW BACK HOME!"

"WHO DOES THINK I'M A FOOL? I HAD MY JUMP STUDY MEET! HADGE TEST! WHY LET THE BIRDS EAT IT? CHOMP... CHOMP..."



AND SO HENSEL AND GRITEL WERE REALLY LOST THIS TIME. BUT DO YOU THINK THEY CARE? DO YOU THINK THEY WORRIED? YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT THEY DID! AFTER ALL, IN A FEW HOURS, THEY GOT... YOU SURPRISED IT...

...HUNGRY? I'M STARVED, HENSEL!

ME TOO! I COULD EAT A HORSE! I... I... LOOK!



IT STOOD BEFORE THEM IN THE CLEARING. THE TINY COTTAGE! GRITEL RAN TOWARD IT, GUMMING...

GRITEL! COME BACK! DON'T! STOP! I SAID 'HORSE'... NOT 'HORSE'!

CHOMP... CHOMP... P-FOODIE!



I'VEE, KIDDIEST! Y'SEE HOW THE TRUTH CAN BE DISTORTED? THIS WASN'T MY CANDY HOUSE LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IT WAS A GOOD SUBSTANTIAL BRICK, STUCCO, AND CLAYBOARD COTTAGE. I HAD FOUR ROOMS AND ONE AND ONE-HALF BATHS. SIXTY BY A HUNDRED... \$1,000 DOWN, BALANCE AT FIVE TH, TWENTY YEARS. DEALS FOR 6 (2/3) ONLY 'CAUSE HENSEL SAID HE COULD EAT A HORSE... GRITEL MISUNDERSTOOD HIM.

SEE? HUNT SEE? HUN?



SO NATURALLY THE LITTLE OLD PERSONED WIDOW WHO LIVED THERE ASKED...

HENSEL, INS, HENSEL, LIKE A MOUSE, WHO'S THAT HENSELING AT MY HOUSE?

OH, SHUT UP, Y'OLD BAT!



I'M NOT KIDDING! SHE WAS NO BITCH! LISTEN! I OUGHT TO KNOW A WITCH WHEN I SEE ONE. THIS OLD LADY WAS A SWEET LITTLE OLD THING...

MY LAR! CHILDREN! CANDY! ARE YOU HUNGRY? COME INSIDE!

ONE SIDE, Y'OLD BAT!



THIS LITTLE OLD LADY, KIND-HEARTED SOUL THAT SHE WAS, LISTENED TO HENSEL AND GRITEL'S STORY...

AND SINCE MAMA AND PAPA... CHOMP... COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY US FOOD... THEY LEFT US IN THE WOODS TO DIE... CHOMP BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE US. BLUFF... SUPPER!

CHOMP... SON... SON! OH, YES! SAE, AIN'T IT?



AND FELL FOR IT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

YOU TWO LITTLE BAKING CAN STAY HERE! I'LL FEED YOU! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'LL BUY YOU PRETTY CLOTHES... TOY... CANDY... SOAPS... MALTED...

HENSEL! THIS OLD BAT MUST BE LOADED!

JUST SHUT UP AND PLAY ALONG!





SO YOU SEE, KIDNERS, THIS LITTLE OLD LADY WASN'T GETTING READY TO ROAST THE BRATS ALIVE! ALL SHE WAS DOING WAS GETTING THE FIRE STARTED IN THE OVEN TO BAKE A CAKE IN CELEBRATION OF HANDEL AND GRETEL'S COMING TO LIVE WITH HER...

THERE WE ARE... A  
NICE ROARING FIRE! NOW!



WHEN HANDEL AND GRETEL PUSHED HER IN...

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEH!



AND LISTENED TO HER BURN TO A CRISP...

SHE GONE YET, CHOMP?

REAL... CHOMP... GONE!



THEN THEY TOOK ALL OF THE POOR OLD LADY'S JEWELS...

SOME HAUL!

THINK OF THE FOOD THIS WILL BUY!



AND WENT HOME TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER AND FATHER'S CARM AND TOLD THEM THE FANTASTIC STORY THAT YOU'VE BELIEVED...

AND THAT'S IT. TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM BEING ROASTED ALIVE, WE PUSHED HER INTO THE OVEN. AND THEN WE FOUND THEM...

GOOD LORD! JEWELS! SOLD!

WELCOME HOME, DARLINGS!



BELIEVED UP TO NOW, THAT IS! NOW OF COURSE, YOU KNOW THE TRUE STORY OF HANDEL AND GRETEL. BAH, BUT WELL, THAT'S THE NAME OF THIS DEPARTMENT! NEXT TIME, I'LL TELL YOU... ER... WELL... LET'S JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT MY BOSS EDITORS DREAM UP. NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO WILL WIND UP MY REEF RAB WITH A TALE FROM HIS CRYPT OF FEAROR.

WEL, NOW! AND AS THE BOB CONSTRUCTION MAN SAID WHEN HE FOUND THE BOAT IN THE CEMENT MACHINE, "DID THAT CRAZY MIXED-UP KID!"



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEN! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME, YOUR **CRYPT-KEEPER**, TO **WIND UP** THE OLD BAG'S MAN. SO, SINCE YOU'VE BEEN **TUCKED AWAY** WITH A LITTLE **FAIRY SALE**, ... PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A **NIGHTMARE** FROM ME! COME... COME WITH ME TO THE LAND OF THE **CHERNOKEE**... SOUTH... SOUTH OF SOUTH... WHERE VAMPIRE PITS AGAINST MAN, AND ONLY THE WITTIEST SURVIVE. OUR HERO WILL BE THE WITTIEST! EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST HALF-BO. THIS TALK, I CALL...

## COUNTRY CLUBBING!



FAR OFF, THE SWAMPS ECHOED WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING YELPS OF BLOOD HOUNDS. FOR ON THIS DARK NIGHT, THE CHAIN GANG WAS SEARCHING FOR ONE ESCAPED CONVICT...



AS IF IN ANSWER TO HIS WILD, BREATHLESS BABBLING, A LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS...



A SHAG!  
THEY'LL HAVE  
FOOD!

I'LL KILL 'EM... KILL 'EM  
DEAD! STUPID FOTTEN  
PEOPLE OUNTA BE DEAD  
FOR JUST LIVIN' IN THIS  
SMELLY HOG SLOP!



THIS HERE CYPRESS STICK'LL  
MAKE ME A GOOD GLOB!  
BEAT THEIR BRAINS OUT!  
... BEAT 'EM OUT DEAD!



WOMAN!...



GIMME THAT...



THERE, FODD!



I'M HUNGRY!



THE CONVICT GULVED AND CONVULSED WITH THE  
EXCITEMENT OF FODD AT LAST! FODD... ALL FOR  
HIM AND NO ONE ELSE... **RIP ALONE!**



ALONE?





IT STOOD HUGE AND UGLY. IT WAS A MAN... THE 1 DEAD WOMAN'S MAN. HIS FACE WOULD SCARE THE WITS OUT OF ANY STRIPPED BRUNK...



... And it did!



GET AWAY! DON'T TOUCH ME! I... I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT HER! I WAS HUNGRY... HONEST!



OWWWWW! HELP!



IT'S TH' DEVIL HIMSELF! I AIN'T READY FEN YA YET! YA GOTTA KETCH ME! LEMME OUTA HERE!



BACK OUT INTO THE DARKNESS AND THE SWAMP! HE HAD. EVEN THE NOODS WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM THAN THIS SHOULDISH-LOOKING MONSTER...

HEH? HEN? I CAN OUT-LEG HIM... THE STUMBLIN' IDIOT!



... YET HE STILL FOLLOWED... WITH THE CLUB!



HIS WILD RUNNING BROUGHT HIM BACK ONTO THE PATH OF THE BAKING BLOOD MOON... THEIR THROATS SORE AND EAGER FOR A SNALLOW OF FLESH...

**HAROOOOOOO**



MY LEGS! CAN'T  
MOVE 'EM! I'M  
EXHAUSTED!  
NO! NO! IT'S

**BUMPS AND  
BUMPERS!**



GOTTA PULL UP! I'LL  
PULL UP THIS TREE...  
CLIMB IT SO DONS  
CAIN'T BIT ME!



AT LAST!  
NO MUDDY  
EARTH NOW  
DONS KIN  
EAT ME!



**AAEEEE!** IT'S A RAT!  
IT'S GOT ME!  
HELP!



IT'S A FILTHY  
POSSUM! I'LL  
FLING YA TO THE  
DARREST!



WHILE THEY  
EAT ME, I'M  
SHEDDING!



YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLAW!





IF THAT CRAZY CRITTER  
THINKS HE'S GONNA KETCH  
ME, HE BETTER GET A *ROAD*,  
'CAUSE I'M TRAVLIN' ON  
WATER FROM HERE OUT!



CAN'T SEE TOO WELL,  
THIS LOU'LL DO!



WITH CRAZED STRENGTH, THE CONVICT GRABBED A  
DANGLING VINE AND CLIMBED TO SAFETY. . .



GATOR HATE, I  
AIN'T GONNA BE!



YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE *GLASS*!

AS HE UNTWISTED HIMSELF FROM THE VINES THAT  
TWISTED AROUND HIS ARMS AND LEGS, ONE YING BEGAN  
TO SLOTTLE MORE...

GOOD LORD! A  
**SNAKE!**



TRUE! IT WAS A SNAKE - A LONG, BROWN AND YELLOW  
COTTONMOUTH SNAKE. AND IT BARK ITS TEETH INTO  
THE CONVICT, EJECTING ITS STORED-UP VENOM...

YOU DID IT!  
YOU BIT ME!  
YOU BITT! NOW  
I'LL TEACH YA!



IN HIS FIT OF FEAR AND ANGER, HE  
HEAT THE REPTILE TO DEATH...

I'LL KILL YA!  
KILL YA! KILL  
YA!



SUDDENLY, THE SWAMP ANSWERED  
BACK TO HIM WITH A WILD HUN OF  
GNATS AND MOSQUITOES...



... FOLLOWED BY PURSUING BATS,  
FLAPPING AND FRIGHTENING THE  
CONVICT DEEPER INTO THE SWAMP...



HE RAN WILD. FEAR, NOW, HAD CONTROL OF HIS CRIMINAL  
BRAIN. ONLY INSTINCT KEPT HIM FIGHTING TO ESCAPE  
THE MURDERED WOMAN'S HAIR...



YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!



THE OVERFUCKER HAD NOW RAPED ALL OF HIS ENERGY. HE COULDN'T GO ON. THIS WAS IT...

HE'S GONNA GET ME... GET ME LIKE I GOT HIS WIFE!

I'M SORRY!  
I DON'T MEAN TO HURT HER!  
LET ME LIVE!  
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!  
DON'T USE TH' CLUB!

STAY AWAY!  
KEEP AWAY!  
DON'T KILL ME!  
IT'LL BE MURDER!  
YOU'LL BE A MURDERER!

HELP!  
PLEASE  
HELP!

OH... HERE'S AN  
OLD MISTAKE!  
TA FERRUT AND  
LEFT IT WAY  
BACK AT BOON  
HOUSE!

I... EH, EH... I FORGOT ME... EH, EH...  
SLOP. DON'T THAT... EH, EH... FORGET?  
I... EH, EH... FORGOT BY... EH, EH...  
EH, EH, EH...

AND SO WE LEAVE OUR CONVICT FRIENDS... JEREBING AWAY... A RAINING MAKING DEEP IN THE OVERFUCKER. SOMETHING JUST... SHALL WE SAY... GRABBED, WHEN THE BIG SLOP PRACTICED HIS SOUTHERN GREY HOSTILITY... WHICH IS ALWAYS RETURN THINGS THAT AIN'T RIGHTFULLY YOURS! WELL THAT ABOUT WINDS UP OUR MORDED MASH, WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, SLES FROM THE CRYPT! OH, BY THE WAY, DID YOU FOR-

BUT ABOUT THE E.C. FAN-ARREST CLUB? NO? HMMM! THAT'S TOO BAD! 'BYE, NOW... E.C., THAT IS!

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# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO YOU GOT YOUR GRIMY PAWS ONE ONE OF YOUR OLD MAN'S DIMES, BOUGHT MY MUCK-MAG, AND NOW YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER SLIME-SERVING FROM MY CAULDRON HERE IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, EH? WELL, TUCK YOUR OROOL CUPS UNDER YOUR DOUBLE CHINS, KNOT YOUR NAPKINS AROUND YOUR HUBBY NECKS, AND YOUR OELIRIUM DIETICIAN, YOUR REEKING-RESTAURATEUR, YOUR MORBIO-MENU-MAKER, THE OLD WITCH, WILL OISH OUT ANOTHER OF HER REVOLTING RECIPES. READY? GOOO! THEN HERE GOES WITH THE NAUSEATING NOVELETTE I CALL...

## CREEP COURSE



STELLA'S FURNISHED ROOM WASN'T VERY FAR FROM THE UNIVERSITY. IN FACT, FROM HER FRONT WINDOW, SHE COULD SEE THE TOWER OF MEMORIAL HALL RISING ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS. SHE'D HURRIED THE FEW BLOCKS FROM THE CAMPUS, FLUNG OPEN THE OODR, TOSSED HER BOOKS ON A CHAIR, AND NOW SHE STOOD BAZING OUT OVER THE COLLEGE TOWN AND SMILING A TRIUMPHANT SMILE...

"ANCIENT CIVILIZATION? YOU'RE ONE COURSE I WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY MORE!"



STELLA TURNED AND GRINNED AT HER REFLECTION IN THE FULL-LENGTH MIRROR ON THE CLOSET DOOR. SHE EYED HER BALLERINA SHOES, HER FULL SKIRT, HER TIGHT-FITTING SWEATER, AND SHE SHOOK HER HEAD...



UH-UH! NO SIR! THIS OUTFIT IS OKAY FOR PERKING A PROF'S INTEREST DURING THE DAY, BUT NOW THAT I'VE BEEN INVITED TO AN EVENING SESSION...

STELLA SWUNG OPEN THE CLOSET AND UNHOOKED HER VERY BEST STRAPLESS FROM THE RACK...



...IT'S TIME TO ROLL. *Hi, Stella!* OUT THE BIG GUNS!! SAY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

IT WAS MITZI, STELLA'S ROOMMATE. SHE CROSSED THE SMALL ROOM AND FINGERED THE EVENING GOWN



GOT A HEAVY DATE TONIGHT, MITZI! IT ISN'T A BLIND DATE, I HOPE. I WOULDN'T FOOL AROUND WITH ANY BLIND DATE THESE DAYS!

STELLA SCOFFED...

OH, CUT IT, MITZI. SO A FEW STUDENTS DISAPPEAR FROM THE CAMPUS. IS THAT ANY REASON TO START UGLY RUMORS ABOUT MANIACS AND MURDERERS AND STUFF LIKE THAT?



I DIDN'T START THE RUMORS, STELLA. I'M JUST REPEATING WHAT I HEARD. WHO'S THE GUY?



WELL...IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO TELL! IT'S... PROFESSOR FINLEY!



PROFESSOR FINLEY?! THE 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' TEACHER?! ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? WHY HE'S AN OLD CREEPY!



HE MAY BE AN OLD CREEPY, MITZI, BUT IF I DON'T PASS 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION', I DON'T GRADUATE. AND WHAT I KNOW ABOUT ANCIENT CIVILIZATION WOULDN'T FILL A THIMBLE.



OH, I GET IT! GONNA VAMP 'IM, EH?



GONNA TRY! DON'T FORGET! NOT A WORD! I PROMISED HIM I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL.



WELL, HAVE FUN, STELLA. I GOTTA RUN. THE GANG'S OVER AT MORREY'S. WE'RE GONNA HAVE A JAM SESSION. DON'T WORRY! YOUR SECRET'S SAFE WITH ME.



MITZI LEFT AND STELLA STRETCHED OUT ON THE BED. SHE SMILED IMPISHLY...



POOR PROFESSOR FINLEY! IF HE ONLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS LETTING HIMSELF IN FOR!

IT WAS GOING TO BE SO SIMPLE. STELLA'D PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY, EVER SINCE THAT FIRST WEEK... WHEN THEY'D COVERED EGYPTIAN CULTURE AND SHE'D KNOWN SHE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PASS THAT COURSE, WHAT WITH GREECE AND ROME YET TO COME. SHE'D WORKED ON PROFESSOR FINLEY, AND THIS AFTERNOON, SHE'D FINALLY SUCCEEDED...



OH, ER, MISS SHARR, I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU AFTER MY LECTURE.

OF COURSE, PROFESSOR.

SHE'D BEEN SO CAREFUL ABOUT HER MAKE-UP. SHE'D WORN HER MOST FLATTERING SWEATERS. SHE'D SAT CROSS-LEGGED IN CLASS TILL HER MUSCLES HAD ACHED, AND HE'D FINALLY BITTEN...



YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, PROFESSOR?

LAST NIGHT I READ YOUR PAPER ON THE 'FALL OF ROME' MISS SHARR, FRANKLY, I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU'VE GRASPED FROM MY LECTURES!

I... I'M A LITTLE WORRIED MYSELF, PROFESSOR. I'VE TRIED! HONESTLY, I'VE TRIED! BUT I JUST HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD...



I THOUGHT I'D MADE THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS QUITE CLEAR, MISS SHARR. I FEEL TERRIBLE. HAVE I COVERED TOO MUCH GROUND TOO FAST FOR YOU?



PERHAPS. IF YOU REVIEWED IT FOR ME, PROFESSOR... SAY, SOME EVENING?

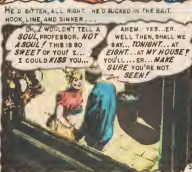


THAT... ER... THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY IRREGULAR, MISS SHARR. THE FACULTY FROWNS ON FRATERNIZATION...



OH! I... I SEE! WELL... I... I WOULDN'T WANT TO GET YOU INTO ANY KIND OF TROUBLE...

ER... PERHAPS, IF NO ONE KNEW... IF IT WAS... SAY... OUR LITTLE SECRET... I MEAN... WELL... I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU, MISS SHARR! YOU'RE A... VERY NICE... ER... AH... GIRL... COME...



HE'D BITTEN, ALL RIGHT. HE'D SUCKED IN THE BAIT. HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

OH, I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL, PROFESSOR. NOT A SOUL! THIS IS SO SWEET OF YOU! I... I COULD KISS YOU...

AHEM. YES... ER... WELL THEN, SHALL WE SAY... TONIGHT... AT EIGHT... AT MY HOUSE? YOU'LL... ER... MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT SEEN!

STELLA YAWNED AND STRETCHED. SHE LOOKED AT HER WATCH.



GOLLY! IT'S ALMOST EIGHT! I'VE GOT TO HURRY!

PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE OLD FASHIONED MONSTROSITIES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN VERY STYLISH. STELLA LIFTED THE HUGE DOOR KNOCKER. THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED DOWN LONG CORRIDORS AND UP STEEP STAIRCASES AND ONCE AWAY IN DARK CORNERS WITHIN. THE DOOR SQUEAKED OPEN...



MISS SHARP? IS THAT YOU?

YES, PROFESSOR! IT'S ME!

STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR, MOVING LITHELY, TRYING TO LOOK VERY DESIRABLE...



WHY, MISS SHARP? YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP!

OH, THIS? IT'S JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING I PICKED UP FOR COCKTAILS! LIKE IT?

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES. 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' WAS ONE COURSE SHE WASN'T GOING TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT...



IT'S...IT'S A VERY NICE DOWN, MISS SHARP. YOU... YOU LOOK VERY LOVELY!

CALL ME STELLA, PROFESSOR!

ALL RIGHT... ER STELLA. COME... COME INTO THE LIBRARY!

OH, WHAT A LOVELY HOUSE! EVERYTHING IS SO...SO... INTERESTING!



STELLA HID HER REAL FEELINGS. THE INSIDE OF THE HOUSE WAS WORSE THAN THE OUTSIDE. THERE WERE STATUES WHEREVER ONE LOOKED... MARBLE BUSTS OF ROMAN EMPERORS... FULL LENGTH POSES OF MIGHTY ROMAN WARRIORS... ROMAN POETS, WRITERS, MATHEMATICIANS. COLUMNS LINED THE WALLS, BETWEEN WHICH WERE HUNG PAINTINGS OF ANCIENT ROMAN SCENES.



DO YOU FIND IT INTERESTING, MISS...ER... STELLA? COME! I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING REALLY INTERESTING...

PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A SMALL DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL. HE MOTIONED STELLA DOWN THE STEPS...



IT'S IN THE CELLAR! COME...

THE CELLAR? LORD! WHAT I WON'T DO TO GRADUATE!

STELLA DESCENDED THE STEPS SLOWLY, THINKING TO HERSELF...



ALL I HAVE TO DO IS THROW MY ARMS AROUND HIM AND KISS HIM AND HE'S A DEAD DUCK! HE WON'T DARE FLUNK ME. POOR PROFESSOR FINLEY!

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED ROMAN CULTURE, STELLA!

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS WAS ANOTHER DOOR... A MASSIVE OAK DOOR...



OPEN IT, STELLA! SURE, PROFESSOR!

STELLA OPENED IT. PROFESSOR FINLEY PUSHED. STELLA SPRAWLED THROUGH...



PROFESSOR! HEH, HEH, HEH!

THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT BEHIND STELLA. THE LOCK SNAPPED. PROFESSOR FINLEY'S MANIACAL LAUGH ECHOED THROUGH...



PROFESSOR. MY GOD! WHAT IS THIS! LET ME OUT! HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH!

FOOTSTEPS FACED AWAY UP THE CELLAR STAIRS. STELLA SCREAMED AFTER THEM. SUDDENLY, STELLA'S BLOOD FROZE. SHE HEARD THE LOW-THROATED GROWL...



WHO... WHO'S THERE? HE'S GOT ANOTHER ONE! YOU POOR KID!

STELLA PEERED INTO THE GLOOM. SHE SEEMED TO BE IN SOME SORT OF HUGE ROOM. THERE WERE OTHER FIGURES Huddled TOGETHER IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR...



WHO... WHO ARE YOU? HE'S MAD! HE TRAPPED US THE SAME WAY HE TRAPPED YOU! THIS IS HIS COLOSSEUM! SEE? SEE THE CAGES...?

AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAVERNOUS CELLAR CHAMBER, STELLA COULD SEE THE BARS... AND BEHIND THEM, THE BURNING YELLOW EYES AND THE GLEAMING TEETH...



HE'S GOT A LION BACK THERE... AND A TIGER... ...A GORILLA! WE'RE TO BE HIS 'CHRISTIAN MARTYRS'! OH, NO! NO!

STELLA'S EYES WERE BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS NOW. SHE COULD SEE THE OTHERS... YOUNG GIRLS LIKE HERSELF... SHIVERING IN THE DARK DAMPNES. SHE RECOGNIZED THEM. THEY WERE STUDENTS... THE STUDENTS THAT HAD DISAPPEARED...



HE THINKS HE'S NERO!

HE'S CRAZY!

HE'S GOING TO SACRIFICE US TO THOSE BEASTS!

SUDDENLY THE CELLAR REVERBERATED WITH A RECORDED TRUMPET FANFARE. THE LIGHTS WENT ON. STELLA BLINKED. THE SAND FLOOR OF THE CELLAR WAS STAINED RED. IN THEIR CAGES, THE ANIMALS ROARED, BROODING HUNGRILY...



GREETINGS, MY BELOVED SUBJECTS!

LOOK!

GOOD LORD!

PROFESSOR FINLEY ENTERED A DRAPED BOX. HE HAD DISCARDED HIS DRESSING GOWN AND NOW STOOD PROUDLY IN A WHITE ROMAN TOSA, A WREATH OF LAUREL ON HIS HEAD...



NERO, EMPEROR OF ALL ROME, WELCOMES YOU!

PROFESSOR! HAVE PITY!

STELLA AND THE OTHER GIRLS Huddled TOGETHER, WHIMPERING, AS THE MAD MAN RAISED HIS WINE GLASS

LET THE CELEBRATION BEGIN.



BEHIND HIS SCREENED BOX, PROFESSOR FINLEY PRESSED A BUTTON. THEN ANOTHER. STELLA SCREAMED. THE BARS OF THE CAGES ROLLED OPEN...



THE LION SNARLED. THE TIGER PACED TOWARD THEM. THE GORILLA POUNDED HIS CHEST, WADDLING OUT OF HIS CAGE. THE CELLAR RESOUNDED WITH THE HYSTERICAL SHRIEKINGS OF THE HELPLESS GIRLS...



YAAAAAAAH HHHGGHHH!

AND AS THE SHRIEKS AND SCREAMS ROSE TO A CRESCENDO, HARMONIZING IN A HORROR SYMPHONY WITH THE ROARS OF THE BLOOD-STARVED BEASTS, THE MANIC MUNCHER GRAPES AND STRUMMED HIS LYRE AND WATCHED THE RIPPING... THE TEARING... THE VERY DEATH SCENE HIS MANIACAL COUNTERPART HAD WATCHED NINETEEN CENTURIES AGO...

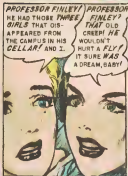




STELLA SCREAMED. NITZI SHOOK HER AGAIN.  
STELLA SAT UP, WIDE-EYED...



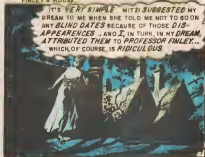
STELLA CLUNG TO HER ROOMMATE, SOBBING...



STELLA LEAPED FROM THE BED...  
DREAM OR NO DREAM... I'M GOING TO GET THAT SHEEPSKIN! SEE YOU.



SHE HURRIED DOWN DARK STREETS TO PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE.



PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WASN'T AT ALL AS STELLA HAD DREAMED IT. THERE WAS NO OODKNOCKER. INSTEAD, SOFT CHIMES SANG FROM WITHIN AS SHE TOUCHED THE BUTTON...



MISS SHARP? YES, IS THAT YOU? PROFESSOR! IT'S ME!

STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR. THIS WAS NO DREAM NOW! THIS WAS IT!



WHY, MISS SHARP? YOU'RE ALL DRESSED UP! OH, THIS?! IT'S JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING I PICKED UP FOR COCKTAILS! LIKE IT!

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES, ANCIENT CIVILIZATION WAS ONE COURSE...



COME WITH ME, MISS SHARP! WE'LL GET STARTED... CALL ME STELLA, PROFESSOR!

PROFESSOR FINLEY LED STELLA DOWN A LONG HALL TO A HUGE DOOR. HE SWUNG IT OPEN...



WELL, THANK GOODNESS, PROFESSOR! I WOULD HAVE DIED IF I SAW ANY ROMAN STATUES OR PAINTINGS OR THE LIKE... OH, NO, MISS SHARP! ER... STELLA! ROMAN CIVILIZATION NEVER REALLY INTERESTED ME...

THE LOCK SNAPPED BEHIND THEM. STELLA LOOKED AROUND, RELIEVED. THE WALLS BORE WEIRD INSCRIPTIONS AND STRANGE DRAWINGS. AT ONE END OF THE ROOM STOOD THREE... THREE. STELLA GASPED



MUMMY CASES? THREE OF THEM? YES, STELLA! EGYPTIAN CULTURE IS MY FORTÉ! I AM PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE BURIAL PRACTICES OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

STELLA BACKED OFF. PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A CABINET AND DREW FORTH AN EGYPTIAN PRIEST'S MANTLE. HE DROPPED HIS ROBE, PLACED THE MANTLE ON HIS HEAD, AND CAME TOWARD HER... THE YARDS AND YARDS OF BURIAL GAUZE TRAILING BEHIND HIM...



IT'S AN INTERESTING PROCESS, STELLA... MUMMIFICATION... NO! NO! CHOKER...

HEE, HEE! WELL, KIDDIES, THAT ABOUT WRAPS IT UP... FOR STELLA, THAT IS. PROFESSOR FINLEY HAS FOUR MUMMY CASES NOW, AND THERE ARE FOUR GIRLS MISSING FROM THE CAMPUS. STRANGE THING ABOUT 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' STUDENTS. THEY EITHER FLUNK OUT, DROP OUT, OR... HEE, HEE... DIE OUT. NOW, THE MAULT-KEEPER WHIMPS WITH HIS GORY STORY! I'LL SEE YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER OF MY GRIM FAIRY TALES, INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU HAVEN'T JOINED THE E.G. FAN-ADDICT CLUB... WHY FIGHT IT? IT'S BIGGER THAN BOTH OF US! DID YOU LATER!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! NOW IT'S MY TURN TO SHIVER YOUR TIMBERS. YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO PRESENT ANOTHER PIECE OF PUTRID PROSE FROM MY CREEPY COLLECTION OF TERROR-TOMES. THIS SCREAM-SELECTION OUGHT TO CHILL YOUR WATERY BLOOD! I CALL IT...

## NO SILVER ATOLL!

WHEN WE BOARDED THE TRANS-PACIFIC AIRLINER IN SAN FRANCISCO, CLARK AND I WERE PERFECT STRANGERS. HE CHOSE THE SEAT BESIDE ME AND WE BEGAN TO TALK. BY HAWAII, WE WERE FRIENDS. BY WAKE ISLAND, WE WERE MORE THAN FRIENDS. BY GUAM, I WAS IN LOVE AND KNEW IT. AND WHEN THE ENGINE CAUGHT FIRE SOMEWHERE SOUTH-EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE ONLY TERROR... THE ONLY FEAR I HAD... WAS NOW THAT I'D FOUND CLARK. I WAS GOING TO LOSE HIM...

CLARK! LOOK! THAT ENGINE! FLAMES!

GOOD LORD! THE PLANE'S ON FIRE!

ATTENTION ALL PASSENGERS! FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS! FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS! WE'RE GOING DOWN...



I REMEMBER THE STEWARDESS STUMBLING UP AND DOWN THE AISLE, COMFORTING US, REASSURING US, AND THE SCREAMING WHINE OF THE WIND OUTSIDE MIXING WITH THE SHRIEKS OF THE PASSENGERS INSIDE AS OUR PLANE DOVE SEAWARD. AND I REMEMBER HOW I TOOK CLARK'S HAND AND HELD IT TO MY TREMBLING LIPS...



O-DARLING! I-I'M F-FRIGHTENED...

EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT, RUTH! YOU'LL SEE...

THE PACIFIC CAME UP TO MEET US, BLUE AND VAST AND ROLLING, AND THE MOMENTS BEFORE WE HIT WERE ETERNITIES. THEN, THE SUDDEN SHOCK! THE SPRAY EXPLODING UPWARD AROUND US! THE HISSING OF THE FLAMING ENGINE AS THE SEA WATER ENVELOPED IT.



THE PLANE WENT DOWN NOSE FIRST IN A MATTER OF MINUTES. I SHUDDERED AS I WATCHED THE TAIL SECTION SINK SLOWLY BENEATH THE CHOPPY PACIFIC.

WHAT ISLAND IS THAT, CAPTAIN?  
I DON'T KNOW! THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF ISLANDS IN THIS AREA... MANY UNCHARTED!



HOURS LATER, WE PULLED OUR RAFTS UP ON A SPUME-LINED SLIMY SHORE, FOUL-SMELLING DRIFTWOOD AND REEKING SEAWEED COVERED THE NARROW STEAMING BEACH.

I THOUGHT THESE PACIFIC ATOLLS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE LITTLE PARADISES.  
ONLY IN TRAVEL FOLDERS



THEN, THE UTTER SCREAMING CONFUSION, AS WE REALIZED WE WERE SINKING, SOMEONE OPENED THE ESCAPE HATCH AND WE POURED OUT ONTO THE WING. MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS, REMEMBERED TO SALVAGE THE MEDICAL KIT, AND THE PILOT, CAPTAIN MILLER, MANAGED TO INFLATE TWO LIFE RAFTS.

QUICKLY! GET INTO THE RAFTS. SHE'S SINKING FAST.  
LOOK, CAPTAIN MILLER! LAND! AN ISLAND!



AFTER WE'D CLEARED A CAMPSITE, CAPTAIN MILLER CALLED US ALL TOGETHER.

NOW, I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE'RE GOING TO BE HERE... IT MAY BE A WEEK... IT MAY BE SIX MONTHS. EVENTUALLY, WE'LL BE RESCUED. THIS IS NEAR THE SHIPPING LANES IN ANYCASE, OUR SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON EVERYONE'S COOPERATION!



THERE IS PLENTY OF FRUIT GROWING ON THE ISLAND, AND PLENTY OF FISH IN THE LAGOON SO WE WON'T STARVE. WE'VE GOT ONE GUN, ONE BOX OF SHELLS, AND A MEDICAL KIT WITH ALL THE DRIFTWOOD AROUND, WE CAN BUILD A SIGNAL PYRE, AND IF A PLANE OR A SHIP COMES BY, WE'LL BE ABLE TO LIGHT IT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. SO, ALL IN ALL, OUR SITUATION COULD BE A LOT WORSE.



SO THERE WE WERE, ELEVEN HUMAN BEINGS MARoonED ON AN UNINHABITED TROPICAL ISLAND. THAT FIRST NIGHT, AS CLARK AND I SAT BESIDE EACH OTHER AND LISTENED TO THE SQUEALING TROPICAL BIRDS OFF IN THE DENSE OVERGROWTH, I NOTICED...

WHAT'S WRONG, CLARK? I, I AM, RUTH, WE'VE... YOU LOOK WORRIED.  
WE'VE GOT TO BE RESCUED SOON. WE'VE JUST GOT TO.



A WEEK WENT BY. NO PLANE OR SHIP CAME NEAR OUR ISLAND. AND STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. **ONE OF OUR PARTY WAS A THIEF.**



THAT'S RIGHT. MY RING WAS STOLEN LAST NIGHT. I DEMAND ITS RETURN.

I DON'T KNOW WHO THE GUILTY PARTY IS, MR KUBLESKI, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST TO FIND OUT.

EVERY NIGHT, SOMETHING ELSE WAS STOLEN FROM ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR GROUP...



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT. CAPTAIN! MY BELT-BUCKLE WAS OF LITTLE VALUE. WHO WOULD WANT TO STEAL A BELT-BUCKLE?

ONE OF US IS A CLEPTOMANIC. I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO POST A WATCH. TWO OF US AT A TIME WILL STAND GUARD WHILE THE OTHERS SLEEP. THIS PETTY THIEVERY MUST BE STOPPED.

CAPTAIN MILLER FUMBLING THROUGH HIS POCKETS...



I'LL FLIP A COIN TO SEE WHO... WHO... THAT'S FUNNY! I WAS SURE I HAD SOME CHANGE. ANYBODY GOT A QUARTER?

I HAVE, CAPTAIN! I... I... THAT'S STRANGE.

ONE BY ONE, WE ALL SEARCHED OUR POCKETS AND PURSES. IT WAS INCREDIBLE...



I HAD PLENTY OF CHANGE. I REMEMBER! NOW, I'VE ONLY A PENNY AND TWO NICKELS.

ALL OF MY DIMES AND QUARTERS ARE GONE... STOLEN!

THE THIEF, WHOEVER HE OR SHE WAS, HAD RIFLED THROUGH EVERYONE'S CLOTHES... PROBABLY WHILE WE SLEPT... BUT THE CURIOUS THING WAS...



HE'S ONLY TAKEN DIMES AND QUARTERS AND HALF-DOLLARS!

ALL MY BILLS ARE HERE. A SILVER DOLLAR I HAD IS GONE. MY PENNIES AND NICKELS ARE STILL HERE!

MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS GASPED.



MR. DAWSON, WHAT WAS YOUR BELT BUCKLE MADE OF?

SILVER!

AND MY RING! MY RING WAS SILVER, TOO! IT... IT SEEMS OUR THIEF IS ONLY INTERESTED IN STEALING SILVER! BUT WHY?

WE FOUND OUT WHY! ONE NIGHT AT THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK, I WAS AWAKENED TO THE BLOOD-CURDLING SOUND OF SOMEONE SHRIEKING IN PAIN.



YAAAAHHHHH!

GOOD LORD! WHAT WAS THAT?

THE SCREAM HAD AWAKENED THE WHOLE CAMP. IT HAD COME FROM UP THE BEACH. WE ALL SCRAMBLED TOWARD THE SPOT. THE MOON CAST AN EERIE GREENISH GLOW ON EVERYTHING. HE WAS LYING FACE DOWNWARD ON THE BLOOD-STAINED SAND...



MR. HOWARD! CHOKO... HE'S BEEN TORN TO SHREDS... AS IF HE'D BEEN ATTACKED BY A WILD BEAST...

WE STARED AT EACH OTHER... ASHEN FACES IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT. CAPTAIN MILLER'S VOICE WAS COLD, EXPRESSIONLESS...



BUT THERE ARE NO WILD BEASTS ON THIS ISLAND! ONLY US... THEN ONE OF US IS THE WILD BEAST! I... MR. KUBLESKI! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IN THE PORTION OF EUROPE WHERE I COME FROM, THERE IS A BELIEF THAT CERTAIN HUMAN BEINGS, WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, GRAVE THE FLESH OF OTHER HUMANS. WE CALL THEM WEREWOLVES!



YOU, YOU MEAN THAT ONE OF US IS A WERE-WOLF, MR. KUBLESKI?



...AND IT IS ALSO BELIEVED THAT THE ONLY WAY TO KILL A WEREWOLF IS TO SHOOT IT WITH A SILVER BULLET!



A SILVER... GOOD LORD! THE MISSING COINS... THE RING... THE BELT-BUCKLE... ALL SILVER!



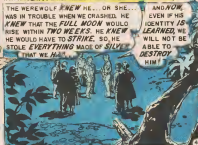
I SHIVERED IN THE TROPICAL NIGHT. CLARK CAME UP BEHIND ME AND SLIPPED HIS ARM AROUND MY SHOULDER...



YOU MEAN THAT UNLESS WE CAN MANUFACTURE A SILVER BULLET, WE CANNOT KILL THIS... THIS THING, MR. KUBLESKI?

THAT IS CORRECT, CLARK. NO LEAD BULLET WILL KILL A WERE-WOLF! ONLY... SILVER...

I LOOKED AT THE FACES AROUND ME AS MR. KUBLESKI SPOKE. CAPTAIN MILLER... MR. DAWSON... MISS KIRBY... MR. ANSEN... MRS. AMES... MR. AMES... WHO WAS IT? WHO?



THE WEREWOLF KNEW HE... OR SHE... WAS IN TROUBLE WHEN WE CRASHED. HE KNEW THAT THE FULL MOON WOULD RISE WITHIN TWO WEEKS. HE KNEW HE WOULD HAVE TO STRIKE, SO HE STOLE EVERYTHING MADE OF SILVER THAT WE HAD...

AND NOW, EVEN IF HIS IDENTITY IS LEARNED, HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DESTROY HIM!

IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I SCARCELY LEFT CLARK'S SIDE. I WAS FRIGHTENED AND HE WAS THE ONLY ONE I COULD TURN TO. . .

CLARK! NEXT WEEK IS THE FULL MOON AGAIN! WHAT WILL WE DO? WHAT IF IT STRIKES AGAIN!

I'LL PROTECT YOU, HONEY! DON'T WORRY!



AND THEN, IT HAPPENED AGAIN. FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE FIRST MURDER, ON THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON, A HORRIBLE SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS OUR TROPIC ISLAND. . .



AND WHEN WE GOT TO MISS KIRBY'S LEAN-TO, WE FOUND HER PALE WHITE BODY TORN AND SHREGGED AND STREAKED RED WITH BLOOD. . .

CHOKED... THE WEREWOLF HAS STRUCK AGAIN!



CAPTAIN MILLER SHOUTED. . .

ALL RIGHT! WE'LL FIND OUT WHO IT IS! WHO'S MISSING? QUICKLY! LOOK AROUND! WHO ISN'T HERE?

DON'T BOTHER

LOOKING, CAPTAIN! IT IS TOO LATE! ONCE THE WEREWOLF'S HUNGER FOR HUMAN FLESH IS SATISFIED, HE RETURNS ONCE MORE TO HIS NORMAL SELF.



MR. KUBLESKI LOOKED AROUND. . .

HE IS NO DOUBT RIGHT HERE AMONG US AT THE PRESENT MOMENT!

ARE THERE ANY TESTS, MR. KUBLESKI... ANY WAYS OF TELLING WHO IS A WEREWOLF?



DURING THE PERIOD PRECEDING THE RISE OF THE FULL MOON, THERE ARE VERY FEW, CLARK! WEREWOLVES ARE MORTALLY AFRAID OF GARLIC. IN THE OLD COUNTRY, MANY PEASANTS STILL HANG GARLIC ON THEIR DOORS AT FULL MOON TIME. AS THE FULL MOON RISES, THE WEREWOLVES EYES TURN RED. A PENTAGRAM IS SEEN ON THE PALM OF HIS INTENDED VICTIM. HIS EYEBROWS MERGE. . . HIS FACE GROWS HAIRY. . . HIS TEETH LENGTHEN. . .



AND THEN, AT EXACTLY THE MOMENT OF THE FULL MOON, THE TRANSFORMATION IS COMPLETE. HE IS, IN FACT, A VERITABLE HUMAN WOLF.

LORO! WHERE CAN WE GET ENOUGH SILVER TO FASHION A SILVER BULLET? WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY THIS GOD-AWFUL CREATURE. . .



WITH MISS KIRBY'S DEATH, I BECAME GUARDIAN OF THE MEDICAL KIT ALTHOUGH MY TRAINING CONSISTED ONLY OF A SHORT NURSE'S AIDE COURSE DURING THE WAR, I NEVERTHELESS MANAGED TO PATCH UP THE VARIOUS CUTS AND BRUISES SUFFERED BY THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARTY. . .

ONE DAY I WAS WALKING DOWN ALONG THE BEACH WHEN I NOTICED A CRATE THAT HAD WASHED ASHORE. I READ THE FADED STENCIL MARKINGS. . .

U.S. ARMY... QUARTERMASTER CORPS... FIELD RATIONS...

I WAVED TO CLARK WHO WAS UP AT THE CAMP. . .

CLARK!  
COME HERE!  
QUICK!

SURE THING,  
RUTH!

DO YOU THINK A SHIP WILL EVER COME, CLARK?

I CERTAINLY HOPE SO, RUTH! I'M SO SICK OF FISH AND FRUIT

CLARK CAME ON THE RUN. I POINTED TO THE ROTTED CRATE... LAUGHING. . .

YOU WANTED SOMETHING ELSE BESIDE FISH AND FRUIT, DARLING! WELL, HERE YOU ARE...

CHDKE...

CLARK RECDILED IN HORROR HE WALKED AWAY... MUTTERING...

...VERY FUNNY!

CLARK, HONEY! I WAS ONLY JOKING! PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY...

HE WALKED ON UP TO CAMP, NEVER ONCE LOOKING BACK. I KICKED AT THE CRATE FURIDUSLY. . .

OH, BLAST YOU! WHY DID YOU PICK THIS BEACH TO WASH UP...

OH... GASP...

THE ROTTED CRATE FELL APART. THE CANS ROLLED OUT OVER THE SAND. I PICKED ONE UP. THE STAMPED LETTERS DENOTING ITS CONTENTS WAS STILL LEGIBLE. . .

GOOD LORD! CANNED SALAMI! SALAMI HAS... CHDKE... GARLIC IN IT!



I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT. I PRAYED I WAS WRONG. CLARK... THE WEREWOLF! HOW COULD IT BE? I LOVED CLARK, I WANTED TO MARRY HIM WHEN ALL THIS WAS OVER. I HAD TO BE SURE. I WENT BACK TO MY LEAN-TO

I OPENED THE MEDICAL KIT. I STUDIED THE CALENDAR. TONIGHT . . . TONIGHT WAS TO BE THE FULL MOON. I STARTED TO CLOSE THE MEDICAL KIT, WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT MY EYE...



OF COURSE! HOW STUPID OF ME NOT TO HAVE THOUGHT OF THIS BEFORE!

THAT NIGHT I WENT TO CLARK'S LEAN-TO. HE LOOKED UP AT ME SADLY...



WHY DID YOU HAVE TO FIND OUT? WE COULD HAVE BEEN SO HAPPY TOGETHER NOW.

I KNOW, CLARK! LOOK! MY PALM! THE PENTAGRAM! YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME!

THERE'S A CALENDAR SOMEWHERE! I KNOW IT! I SAW IT! I... I REMEMBER! THE MEDICAL KIT!



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMED IN UPON HIS FACE AS HE CHANGED... AS HIS EYEBROWS MERGED.



EXACTLY...

...AS HIS EYES TURNED RED AND HIS TEETH LENGTHENED AND THE HAIR GREW OUT OF HIS FACE...



I HAVE TO!

...AND HE SNARLED AND SPRANG AT ME, Slobbering..



...AND I PLUNGED THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE INTO HIS CHEST...



CAPTAIN MILLER CAME AND LOOKED AT CLARK'S DEAD BODY LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT AND THEN HE STARED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY AS I HANDED HIM THE EMPTY HYPODERMIC ID FILLED WITH SILVER NITRATE FROM THE BOTTLE I'D FOUND IN THE MEDICAL KIT...

IT... IT WORKED. SOB... LIKE A SILVER BULLET! YOU CAN TELL... SOB... MR. KUBLESKI...



GOOD LORD!

HEH, HEH! THAT'S RUTHY'S YARN, KIDDIES, EXACTLY AS SHE TOLD IT TO ME. HOW COME SHE MET ME, YOU ASK? SO WHO DO YOU THINK RESCUED HER AND THE OTHER CRUMBS? NATCH! ME! YOU SEE, I WAS TAKING A LITTLE CRUISE THIS SUMMER ON MY GHOST SHIP AND... WELL, THAT'S ANOTHER STORY! I'LL SAVE IT TILL SOME OTHER TIME. NOW



IT'S TIME TO CLOSE UP THE VAULT OF HORROR FOR THIS ISSUE OF O.W.'S MAG, AND TURN YOU BACK TO HER. SO, 'BYE, NOW AND... AS THE UNDERTAKER SAID WHEN HE PAINTED HIS COFFIN-CART RED, "THIS IS A HEARSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR!"

# Graveyard Goodies

Whether you're new to E.C. or just one of the thousands already afflicted with E.C. fever, then the books and other goodies listed below will be of interest to you. Over the past 20 years dozens of publications and assorted memorabilia have been produced on and about E.C., but unfortunately most of them are not available anymore and fetch premium prices among collectors. The items listed here are all of high quality and deserve a place in the heart of any E.C. fan.



## The E.C. HORROR LIBRARY

Over 200 pages of the best of E.C. sandwiched between two gorgeous blood red hardcovers. This FULL COLOR treasury stands 10"x14" and contains 23 complete E.C. classics. This showpiece includes such immortal stories as, "Squeeze Play" by Frank Frazetta, "Foul Play" by Jack Davis, "Midnight Mass" by Joe Orlando, "Honor We, How's Bayou?" by Graham Ingels, "Swamped" by Reed Crandall, and, in addition to the other 17 stories, you'll find an unpublished E.C. terror tale by Angelo Torres! A glorious landmark in the E.C. tradition. Price: \$19.95 plus 75¢ postage and handling.



**THE MONSTER TIMES No. 10**—A special E.C. issue. Originally published in May, 1972. Features interview with Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein as well as great articles on the E.C. convention, the TALES FROM THE CRYPT movie, the E.C. books themselves. Lots of illustrations and a 20"x15" color E.C. cover poster fold-out by Jack Davis. Only a few of these are available. Price: \$2.50 plus 25¢ postage and handling.



## E.C. PORTFOLIOS

1

No. 1—If you ever wondered what the original art to those classic E.C. stories looked like, then you're in for a surprise! This series of art folios is just what the witch doctor ordered. All stories were photographed from the actual original art. You can rest in peace that every single brush stroke is there! The huge folio size and heavy bristol board present you with an unbeatable value. Bound within the rare first issue you have "Touch and Go" by Johnny Craig, "Food For Thought" by Al Williamson and Roy Krenkel, "Honor We, How's Bayou?" by Graham Ingels, plus "My World" by Wally Wood, cover art and more! Price: \$50.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured. Only a few left!

2

No. 2—This folio contains 6 all time E.C. classics, "Squeeze Play," "Air Burst," "Let's Play Poison," "Flying Machine," "Gid Soldiers Never Die," and "Thunder Jet." The beautiful cover of this lavish folio is a FULL COLOR reproduction of Frazetta's unpublished version of the cover to WEIRD SCIENCE FANTASY No. 291. Price: \$25.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

3

No. 3—Full Color covers. Beautifully reproduced. Inside you have Ingels' "With All the Trappings," Williamson's "50 Girls 50," Wood's "Mars Is Heaven," "Ace" by Savern and "Spew of Venus" by Feldstein. Price: \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

4

No. 4—Again you get nothing but the best! Featuring Ingels' "A Little Stranger" and "Chatterboxed," "Bellyful" by Kringsen, "By George" by Williamson, and "Man and Superman" by Kurtzman with 4 more colored covers. Price: \$15.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Insured.

# Graveyard Goodies



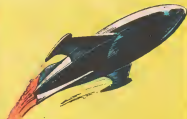
## E.C. COVER POSTERS

Two different FULL COLOR posters of the uncensored covers from THE VAULT OF HORROR No. 32 by Johnny Craig and TALES FROM THE CRYPT No. 38 by Jack Davis. These gigantic (22 x 28 1/2) posters are an easy way of telling your friends that your reading isn't limited to Shakespeare and Freud. They fit just about any wall ... even jail cells! They come mailed in a tube. These posters were \$2.50 each, but now we can offer them to you for only \$1.00 each, but you **must** buy both! That's \$2.00 for both plus 50¢ for postage and handling.



## E.C. T-SHIRT

Why not let everyone know that you're one of those frantic fans struck with E.C. fever? These classy white T-shirts come printed with a huge two color E.C. emblem! Just like the original E.C. (Entertaining Comics) symbol! Why not dump that soiled shirt you've been wearing and order one of these nice numbers. Comes in Small, Medium, Large, and Extra Large. Make sure you specify size when ordering. Price: \$3.00 plus 50¢ postage.



## SQUA TRONT MAGAZINE

No. 2—The greatest of the E.C. fan magazines is once again available for all of you fanatics who lost out last time! Within this 52 page issue you'll find an article on E.C.'s war comics with some unpublished Kurtzman paintings; a 12 page photo of unpublished Williamson E.C. ink sketches; the original "Tiger" strips by Frazetta. Covers by Williamson and Crandall. More! Price: \$3.00 plus 25¢ postage.

No. 3—Color covers by Feldstein and Crandall start off this issue. Featured within you'll uncover a 21 page article of E.C. science fiction, more unpublished Frazetta E.C. death article, 7 pages of Crandall art, some unpublished "Flying Swifts" by George Evans; and more! 60 pages. Price: \$3.00 plus 25¢ postage.

No. 4—100 page blockbuster issue! You actually get four full color covers by Harvey Kurtzman, Graham Ingels, Vaughn Bodé, and Kenneth Smith. Inside this issue you'll take an in-depth look at Harvey Kurtzman and unpublished art from his E.C., Humbug, and Playboy periods. More for the Frazetta collector, E.C. foreign comics, E.C. Club bulletin, art by Wrightson, Krinkel, Williamson, Gorman, etc. PLUS two unpublished E.C. science fiction stories by Reed Crandall and Benke Krige! There's more! Price: \$5.00 plus 25¢ postage.

Make all checks payable to East Coast  
Comix

Send for the above to your fast service ghoul at:

**GRAVEYARD  
GOODIES**  
**Box 21364**  
**San Jose, Calif.**  
**95151**

# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Before we get into the latest batch of drool letters from our faithful fans, there are a few points that need to be covered (with a few caveats of dirt). First: we have made a few remarks in previous issues concerning the E.C. Fan-Addict Club revival. Naturally, we've received a wealth of mail in favor of our beginning a new E.C. Fan-Addict Club. We promised you names, but here it is our 10th reprint and STILL no news! What gives? ... you ask. Well, these things take time and planning and we just haven't finished yet. We find we're OK in the planning department, but we keep running out of time, what with a book a month. And you guys want a book a week? GOOD LORD! All we can say about the club now is to watch for news in future reprints. Second: our place for another E.C. Convention. At this time we're trying to set our sights on 1975 as the target. Again we suggest you train those eyeballs on our upcoming reprints for further, more specific info.

In case you've been wanting to order a copy of the first E.C. Portfolio from our Graveyard Goodies department, but haven't done it yet, do so! It's been out-of-print for some time now, but we still have a handful of copies left.

Now that we've bored you again with our usual drabble, we turn you over to our rancid readers.

## Gentlemen:

Very pleased with your production so far... a great idea well executed. Surely that must make for some satisfaction as well as a few more dreams. The E.C.'s were an integral part of my young life when first I spotted them along with the then new MAD. Unfortunately, the comics controversy as well as the government's good-intentioned and foolishly managed concern over all of us, led me to become slightly "red," saw fit to demand changes in the imaginative and the political as if we were beneath any real awareness of what was happening despite our youth.

The repression of the lilies and subsequent floral excesses of the estates all point to a rather over-cautious attitude we still maintain to this day regarding the "education" of our youth. And, there will always be someone wanting to "help" and proceed to confuse assistance with meddling. We will always be enormously indebted to the Gaines staff that they tempered their anger and grief with more subtle bumps in the form of the early MAD and related publications featuring that brand of humor that has recently been realized to have been the sense approach in the face of government "help."

Sincerely,

Michael C. Gayne  
Los Angeles, California

## Dear East Coast Comics

What! FIVE Dollars for only six comics? But do they look like the old E.C.'s when I was just a kid? Here hand me that CRYPT OF TERROR. Yes, yes... very impressive, but I still feel that... What's the story you say—just try reading a story or two? Well, all right, but if this is any TRICK... Hmm mumble mumble a wish rustle rustle Gr, oh no be couldn't here,—mumble wish, yes yes, rustle. HE DIDI mmm, NOT SO FAST I AINT THROUGH YET! mumble mmm mmm, drool, drool, rustle hmn, yes yes but... GOOD LORD... IT'S TRUE! most moral! They really are, yes.

HERE'S MY \$5. Send me six more E.C.'s HURRY, MAN! Before I go into withdrawal symptoms.

Cheerfully  
Richie Dean  
Richmond, Ky

## Gentlemen

GOOD LORD! EC has returned! You can go home again after all! Just read EC Reprints #1, 2, 4 and 5, and I'm having trouble climbing out of this color line machine back into the 70's. I first read E.C.'s when they (and I) were young. They were a staple in my reading diet from approximately age 10 through 15.

Ballantine Books' black-and-white reprints, 2 or 3 years ago, of some of the stories, were better than nothing, but just bare. The EC REPRINTS are at least as good perhaps better than the originals! These gashy ghoulie glorious covers! Ghastly's ghastly characters! The most beam-ish of BEM's... they're still as addictive as they were in the 50's. Perhaps better, because (1) they're still good stories and art, (2) with age and experience has come new knowledge and ways to appreciate them, and (3) the fantastic nostalgia-zap!

When I ordered #1's, 2, 4 and 5, I figured you were probably going to print 5 or 6 of them, grab a couple of quick EC-nostalgia backs, and close up shop. Then I discovered, inside front cover of #1, that your eye-inspiring overall plan is to eventually reprint EVERY E.C. COMIC! (Gasp! Choke!) One-a-month will do, I guess; but one wishes you were far enough ahead of schedule to issue about one a week.

Suggestions for future reprints: (1) The "SHOCK SUSPENSORIES" (or "Crime Suspensories"), about whose cover Mr. Gaines was quizzed at the Senate Hearing.

"There's blood coming from her mouth"—"A little"—Just to see that cover (again) would almost be worth the buck. (2) (3), (4)—Whichever issues of the horror mag presented Grin Stories on the Old Witch, Crypt Keeper, and Vault Keeper. (5) A Wally Wood sl story, featuring a little girl, product of atomic mutation—she was physically small and ugly, despised by her playmates, one night when "doing something" in a tree, she fell to her death. It was a noble reading. "Whoever finds this, I love you." They just don't write 'em like that anymore!

Questions on future reprints: I know you won't can I do old MAD's, but how about PANIC? Also how about the short-lived "New Directions" mags, put out in a last-ditch effort to keep going without crime & horror? Things like PIRACY, and IMPACT, and probably a couple others—I, for one, would like to see the "Tales of Terror" and "Weird Science-Fantasy" annuals reprinted, at anywhere near a reasonable price.

In the late (or middle?) 50's, I was thrilled to have a letter-to-editor printed in one of the pulp-fiction magazines. I would be hardly less thrilled for you to use all or any part of this one in an EC Reprint.

THANK YOU!  
J. R. McHone  
Charlotte, N.C.

GASP! CHOKEL! Yes... we do plan to reprint ALL the E.C. New Trend books as well as the NEW DIRECTIONS titles. No, we can't reprint the old MAD comics, but perhaps in the future we can get an issue of PANIC out. The main problem with PANIC is the fact that it could be regarded as a competitor to the current MAD. There are quite a few involved problems in the PANIC vs. MAD question which we hope to resolve sometime in the future, but at this point a PANIC reprint just isn't possible.

Send all correspondence to:

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
Box 1290  
Great Neck, N.Y. 11023

# THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HERE'S THE LATEST IN MY FAIRY TALE DEBUNKING CAMPAIGN, KIDDIES. THIS IS THE **REAL SCOOP**... THE **TRUE FACTS** BEHIND THE HAUSEATING NONSENSE THAT YOU'VE READ AS...

## HANSEL and GRETEL!



Y'SEE, ACTUALLY, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE AND TWO KIDS **WEREN'T** SO **BAD OFF**. THEY **WEREN'T** SO **POOR** THAT THEY **COULDN'T** **BUT** **FOOD** LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IN FACT, THE OLD MAN WAS DOING **ALL RIGHT**, WHAT WITH THE **HOUSING BOOM** AND THE **G.I.S** BACK FROM THE **CRUSADES**. THE **REAL TROUBLE** WAS...

**GOOD LORD, WIFE! THEM KIDS! THEY'RE EATING AGAIN!**

**THAT'S ALL THEY DO IS EAT! EAT, EAT! YOU'LL HAVE TO INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE. I JUST CAN'T MANAGE WITH THEM EATING LIKE THAT!**

CHOMP... CHOMP...

CHOMP...

CHOMP...



**STOP WITH THE 'INCREASE MY ALLOWANCE' ROUTINE!**

I'M HANDING OVER MY **WHOLE PAY BAG** NOW. WHY, I STILL **OWE** A FEW **DUCATS** ON MY **NEW AXE**. EVERY TIME THE **COLLECTOR** COMES, I GOT TO **DUCAT**....

...AND THERE'S AN **INSTALLMENT** DUE ON THE **NEW WASH TUB**. OH, WHAT WILL WE DO?

CHOMP... CHOMP... WEAR **DIRTY CLOTHES!** CHOMP...



**YOU SHUT UP AND EAT!**

**NO! DON'T EAT! TALK! DON'T EAT! TALK! SAY SOMETHING!**

**HANSEL! OUR PAR-ENTS SEEM TO BE IN DISAGREEMENT AS TO... CHOMP... WHAT OUR BEHAVIOR... BLURP... SHOULD BE!**

**CRAZY MIXED UP... CHOMP... PAR-ENTS!**



GET THE PICTURE, KIDDIES? ACTUALLY THESE TWO BRATS WERE EATING THEIR FOLKS OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME... SO ONE NIGHT...

WE GOTTA GET RID OF 'EM! WE JUST GOTTA! THAT'S ALL! SUPPER TONIGHT WAS THE LAST STRAW... THE LAST STRAW!

THE LAST STRAW? SOBB! I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD STEAK IN YEARS. ALL THE TIME, THEY EAT STEAK... I EAT STRAW! NOW... NO MORE STRAW, EVEN!

NOW, DON'T GET EXCITED... I GOT A SUGGESTION! WHAT SAY I TAKE 'EM OUT INTO THE WOODS AND DITCH 'EM? WE'D BE RID OF THEM! WE'D EAT AGAIN... REAL FOOD... MEAT... VEGETABLES... YOGURT!

HUSBAND, DEAR! HOW COULD YOU? YOU SHOCK ME! I... I WE'LL DO IT! MAYBE A TREE'LL FALL ON THEM... OR A WILD BEAST...



ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FLIMSY WALL OF THEIR PRE-FAB WOODCUTTER'S CABIN, HANSEL AND GRETEL LISTENED...

CHOMP, CHOMP... D'YA HEAR THAT? THEY'RE GONNA DITCH US, HANS.



LATER, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP, HANSEL TIP-TOED OUTSIDE AND GATHERED UP SOME WHITE PEBBLES...

I'M NO FOOL. I PASSED MY JUNIOR FORESTER'S MERIT BADGE TEST! I'M CLEVER! I'M... I'M... I'M HUNGRY!



AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, WHEN THE WOODCUTTER LED THE CHILDREN INTO THE FOREST, HANSEL WAS READY...

COME, KIDDIES! FOLLOW ME! WE WILL GO DEEP INTO THE WOODS. WE WILL HAVE A PICNIC. WE WILL... NOTICE, SISTER! AS WE PROCEED INTO THE IMPENETRABLE THE IMPENETRABLE THE THICK FOREST, I KEEP DROPPING PEBBLES!



FINALLY, DEEP IN THE FOREST, THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...

WILL! THIS IS IT! THE FINISH! THE PAY-OFF! YOU TWO ARE THROUGH... DONE... WASHED UP! IT'S THE END OF THE LINE...

FATHER'S BEEN READING MICKEY SPILLANE! CHOMP... CHOMP... ME TOO! VA-VA-VOOM!



AND THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, THE WOODCUTTER OASHED OFF, LEAVING HIS TWO CHILDREN STRANDED...

IS HE GONE... CHOMP? HE'S... CHOMP... REAL GONE!



LATER THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON CAME UP AND THE SHINY PEBBLES THAT HANSEL HAD DROPPED GLITTERED LIKE NEWLY MINTED SUBWAY TOKENS, THE CHILDREN RETRACED THEIR STEPS...



WE'RE ALMOST HOME, HANSEL!

YES, I CAN HEAR THE WILD CHEERING AND HYSTERICAL LAUGHING!

THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE HAD JUST SAT DOWN TO THEIR FIRST SQUARE MEAL IN YEARS WHEN THE DOOR TO THEIR TINY COTTAGE SWUNG OPEN...



YUM! YUM! AND MASHED POTATOES! STEAK!

**SURPRISE!**



OH, NO! CHOKE!

MMMM! FOOD! WE'RE STARVED! PASS THE WORCESTERSHIRE! THE WORSTERSHIRE! THE WORST... THE KETCHUP!

THAT NIGHT, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE PLOTTED...



WE'VE GOT TO TRY IT AGAIN, WIFEY! AND THIS TIME, WE'VE GOT TO DO THE JOB RIGHT.

OKAY! OKAY! NOW PASS ME THAT BONE. IT'S MY TURN TO CHAW ON IT!

AND SO, THE NEXT MORNING, THE WOODCUTTER AGAIN LED HIS DARLINGS INTO THE IMPENETRA... THE IMPENET... THE WOODS...



TODAY, WE WILL OBSERVE THE HABITS AND HABITATS OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER... A BIRD OF THE WOODPECKER FAMILY NOTED FOR ITS DISTINCT PLUMMAGE...

CUT THE CORN, POP! GIVE US THE MICKEY SPILLANE ROUTINE AND LET'S GET IT OVER WITH!

THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...



THE STRING'S RUN OUT! YOUR TIME IS UP! ER... SAY YOUR PRAYERS! ER... AH...

GO, ALREADY!

YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!

THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF LEAVING THE TWO CHILDREN DEEP IN THE FOREST... (HEH, HEH... THOUGHT I'D SAY IMPENETRA... IMPENETR... THICK, EH?!)...



COME, HANSEL. SHARE MY CRUST OF BREAD SINCE YOU HAVE TORN UP YOURS INTO TINY CRUMBS TO LEAVE A TRAIL FOR US TO FOLLOW BACK HOME!

WHO DID? THINK I'M A FOOL? I PASSED MY BIRD STUDY MERT BADGE TEST! WHY LET THE BIRDS EAT IT? CHOMP... CHOMP...

AND SO, HANSEL AND GRETEL WERE REALLY LOST THIS TIME. BUT DO YOU THINK THEY CARE? DO YOU THINK THEY WORRIED? YOU'RE DARN RIGHT THEY DID! AFTER ALL, IN A FEW HOURS, THEY GOT... YOU GUESSED IT...

"HUNGRY! I'M STARVED, HANSEL!"

"ME TOO! I COULD EAT A HORSE! I I LOOK!"



IT STOOD BEFORE THEM IN THE CLEARING. THE TINY COTTAGE! GRETEL RAN TOWARD IT, SLOBBERING...

GRETEL! COME BACK! DON'T! STOP! I SAID 'HORSE'. NOT 'HOUSE'!

CHOMP CHOMP P-TOOOEE!



Y'SEE, KIDDIES? Y'SEE HOW THE TRUTH CAN BE DISTORTED? THIS WASN'T ANY CANDY HOUSE LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IT WAS A GOOD SUBSTANTIAL BRICK, FIELSTONE, AND CLAPBOARD COTTAGE...! WITH FOUR ROOMS AND ONE AND ONE-HALF BATHS... SIXTY BY A HUNDRED... \$2,000 DOWN... BALANCE AT FIVE %, TWENTY YEARS... DEALS FOR \$15! ONLY 'CAUSE HANSEL SAID HE COULD EAT A HORSE... GRETEL MISUNDERSTOOD HIM.

SEE? HUN? SEE? HUM?



...SONATURALLY THE LITTLE OLD PENSIONED WIDOW WHO LIVED THERE ASKED...

NIBBLING, NIBBLING... LIKE A MOUSE, WHO'S THAT NIBBLING AT MY HOUSE?

AM, SHUT UP, Y'OLD BAT!



I'M NOT KIDDING! SHE WAS NO WITCH! LISTEN! I OUGHT TO KNOW A WITCH WHEN I SEE ONE. THIS OLD LADY WAS A SWEET LITTLE OLD THING...

MY LAN 'CHILDREN! ARE YOU HUNGRY? COME INSIDE.

GANG-NAY! ONE SIDE, Y'OLD BAG!



THIS LITTLE OLD LADY! KIND-HEARTED SOUL THAT SHE WAS, LISTENED TO HANSEL AND GRETEL'S STORY...

AND SINCE MAMA AND PAPA... CHOMP... COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY US FOOD... THEY LEFT US IN THE WOODS TO DIE... CHOMP BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE US... SLURP... SUFFER!

CHOMP... SOB... SOB! SAD, AIN'T IT? OH... YES!



AND FELL FOR IT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

YOU TWO LITTLE DARLINGS CAN STAY HERE! I'LL FEED YOU! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'LL BUY YOU PRETTY CLOTHES... TOYS... CANDY... SODAS... WALTDES.

HANSEL! THIS OLD BAT MUST BE LOADED! JUST SHUT UP AND PLAY ALONG!







THIS LITTLE OLD LADY **BEGGED** THEM BRATS TO STAY WITH HER.

PLEASE SAY 'YES!' I'VE BEEN SO LONELY SINCE MY HUSBAND DIED LAST YEAR AND LEFT ME WITH ALL THIS **USELESS WEALTH...**

CHOKES



...SHOWED THEM HER JEWELS...HER GOLD...

**USELESS, I SAY... BECAUSE WHAT GOOD IS MONEY IF IT CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS?**

IT CAN BUY MEAT!

CAN IT, BIRD!



**HOT CANNED MEAT, HANS! NICE THICK FRESH...**

**KNOCK IT OFF! LISTEN! AND IT WILL MAKE ME SO HAPPY IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO SPEND ALL THIS ON YOU TWO!**



GRANDMA! YOU GOT A DEAL!

YEAH! WE ACCEPT!

OH, YOU'VE MADE ME SO HAPPY! IF... IF I KNEW YOU WERE COMIN' I'DVE BAKED A CAKE!



**GOINGGGG!**



WHY NOT BAKE ONE NOW, GRANDMA?

I WILL! I WILL!



YOU STAY HERE, AND I'LL GO GET THE FIREWOOD! STAY RIGHT HERE, NOW

WE'RE NOT BUDGIN', GRANNY!

NO! WE'RE SETTIN'... BUT DEF!



BUT AS SOON AS THE LITTLE OLD LADY WAS GONE, HANSEL AND GRETEL RUSHED TO HER TREASURE CHEST...

**HANS! DIG THIS COOL ICE!**

ALL WE DO IS GET RID OF THE OLD BAG AND IT'S ALL OURS! NOW HERE'S THE PLAN!

SO YOU SEE, KIDNIES, THIS LITTLE OLD LADY WASN'T GETTING READY TO ROAST THE BRATS ALIVE! ALL SHE WAS DOING WAS GETTING THE FIRE STARTED IN THE OVEN TO BAKE A CAKE IN CELEBRATION OF HANSEL AND GRETEL'S COMING TO LIVE WITH HER...



THERE WE ARE... A NICE ROARING FIRE! NOW!

...WHEN HANSEL AND GRETEL PUSHED HER IN...



EEEEEEEEEEEEEEGH...

...AND LISTENED TO HER BURN TO A CRISP...

SHE GONE YET...CHOMP?

REAL...CHOMP...GONE!



THEN THEY TOOK ALL OF THE POOR OLD LADY'S JEWELS...

SOME HAUL!

THINK OF THE ADOOD THIS WILL BUY!



AND WENT HOME TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER AND FATHER'S CABIN AND TOLD THEM THE FANTASTIC STORY THAT YOU'VE BELIEVED...

AND THAT'S IT. TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM BEING ROASTED ALIVE, WE PUSHED HER INTO THE OVEN. AND THEN WE FOUND THESE...

GOOD LORD! JEWELS! GOLD!

WELCOME HOME, DARLINGS!



...RELIEVED UP TO NOW, THAT IS! NOW, OF COURSE, YOU KNOW THE TRUE STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL. GRIM, EH? WELL, THAT'S THE NAME OF THIS DEPARTMENT! NEXT TIME, I'LL TELL YOU... ER... WELL... LET'S JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT MY IDIOT EDITORS DREAM UP. NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO WILL WIND UP MY REEK RAG WITH A TALE FROM HIS CRYPT OF TERROR. 'BYE, NOW! AND AS THE BOP CONSTRUCTION MAN SAID WHEN HE FOUND THE GOAT IN THE CEMENT MACHINE, "DIG THAT CRAZY MIXED-UP KID!"



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME, YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER*, TO *WIND UP* THE OLD BAG'S MAG. SO, SINCE YOU'VE BEEN *TUCKED AWAY* WITH A LITTLE *FAIRY TALE*. . . PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A *NIGHTMARE* FROM ME! COME... COME WITH ME TO THE LAND OF THE *OKEFENOKEE*. . . SOUTH... *SOUTH* OF SOUTH... WHERE VARMINT PITS AGAINST MAN, AND ONLY THE WITTIEST SURVIVE. OUR HERO WILL BE THE WITTIEST, EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST HALF-SO. THIS TALE, I CALL . .

## COUNTRY CLUBBING!



FAR OFF, THE SWAMPS ECHOED WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING YELPS OF BLOOD HOUNDS. FOR ON THIS DARK NIGHT, THE CHAIN GANG WAS SEARCHING FOR ONE ESCAPED CONVICT. . .



AS IF IN ANSWER TO HIS WILD, BREATHLESS SABBING, A LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS...



A SHACK!  
THEY'LL HWE  
FOOD!

I'LL KILL 'EM ..KILL 'EM  
DEAD! STUPID ROTTEN  
PEOPLE OUNTA BE DEAD  
FER JUST LIVIN' IN THIS  
SMELLY HOG SLOP!



THIS HERE CYPRESS STICK'LL  
MAKE ME A GOOD CLUB!  
BEAT THEIR BRAINS OUT!  
... BEAT 'EM OUT DEAD!



WOMAN!..



GIMME THET..



THERE, FOOD!



I'M HUNGRY!



THE CONVICT QUIVERED AND CONVULSED WITH THE  
EXCITEMENT OF FOOD AT LAST! FOOD... ALL FOR  
HIM AND NO ONE ELSE... HIM ALONE!



ALONE? !



IT STOOD HUGE AND UGLY. IT WAS A MAN... THE DEAD WOMAN'S MAN. HIS FACE WOULD SCARE THE WITS OUT OF *ANY* STRIPED SKUNK.



...AND IT DID!



GET AWAY! DON'T TOUCH ME! I... I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT HER! I WUZ HUNGRY... HONEST!



OWWWW! HELP!



IT'S TH' DEVIL HISSELF! I AIN'T READY FER YA YET! YA GOTTA KETCH ME! LENME OUTA HERE!



BACK OUT INTO THE DARKNESS AND THE SWAMPS HE RAN, EVEN THE HOUNDS WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM THAN THIS SHOOLISH-LOOKING MONSTER...

HEH! HEH! I CAN OUT-LEG HIM... THE STUMBLIN' IDIOT!



...YET HE STILL FOLLOWED... WITH THE CLUB!



HIS WILD RUNNING BROUGHT HIM BACK ONTO THE PATH OF THE BAYING BLOOD HOUNDS... THEIR THROATS SORE AND EAGER FOR A SWALLOW OF FLESH...



IF THET CRAZY CRITTER  
THINKS HE'S GONNA KETCH  
ME, HE BETTER GET A *BOAT*,  
'CAUSE I'M TRAVLIN' ON  
WATER FROM HERE OUT!



THE CONVICT WADED INTO THE BLACK SWAMP WATER  
AFTER A FLOATING LOG THAT WOULD CARRY HIM TO  
FREEDOM. . .

CAN'T SEE TOO WELL!  
THIS LOG'LL DO!



WITH CRAZED STRENGTH, THE CONVICT GRABBED A  
DANGLING VINE AND CLIMBED TO SAFETY. . .



...YET HE *STILL* FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!



AS HE UNTANGLED HIMSELF FROM THE VINES THAT TWISTED AROUND HIS ARMS AND LEGS, ONE VINE BEGAN TO SLOWLY MOVE...



TRUE! IT WAS A SNAKE... A LONG, BROWN AND YELLOW COTTONMOUTH SNAKE. AND IT BARK ITS TEETH INTO THE CONVICT, EJECTING ITS STORED UP VENOM...



IN HIS FIT OF FEAR AND ANGER, HE BEAT THE REPTILE TO DEATH...



SUDDENLY, THE SWAMP ANSWERED BACK TO HIM WITH A WILD HUM OF GNATS AND MOSQUITOES...



... FOLLOWED BY PURSUING BATS, FLAPPING AND FRIGHTNING THE CONVICT DEEPER INTO THE SWAMP...



HE RAN WILD. FEAR, NOW, HAD CONTROL OF HIS CRIMINAL BRAIN. ONLY *INSTINCT* KEPT HIM FIGHTING TO ESCAPE THE MURDERED WOMAN'S MAN. ...



YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!





THE OKEFENOKEE HAD NOW SAPPED ALL OF HIS ENERGY. HE COULDN'T GO ON. THIS WAS IT...

HE'S GONNA GET ME. GET ME LIKE I GOT HIS WIFE!



I'M SORRY!  
I DIDN'T MEAN  
TO HURT HER!  
LET ME LIVE!  
I DON'T WANT  
DIE! DON'T  
USE TH' CLUB!



STAY AWAY!  
KEEP AWAY!  
DON'T KILL ME!  
IT'LL BE MURDER!  
YOU'LL BE A  
MURDERER!



HELP!  
PLEASE  
HELP!



UH... HERE'S YA  
CLUB, MISTUH!  
YA FERGOT AN  
LEFT IT WAY  
BACK AT MUH  
HOUSE!



I... EH, EH... I FORGOT MY... EH, EH...  
CLUB. ISN'T THAT... EH, EH... FUNNY?  
I... EH, EH... FORGOT MY... EH, EH,  
EH, EH, EH...



AND SO WE LEAVE OUR CONVICT FRIEND... JIBBERING AWAY... A RAVING MANIAC DEEP IN THE OKEFENOKEE. SOMETHING... JUST... SHALL WE SAY... **SNAPPED**, WHEN THE BIG SLOB PRACTICED HIS SOUTHERN OKEY HOSPITALITY... WHICH IS ALWAYS RETURN THINGS THAT AIN'T RIGHTFULLY YOURS. WELL THAT ABOUT WINDS UP O.W.'S MOROSE NAG, WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS. WELL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAIL, **DELES FROM THE CRYPT!** OH, BY THE WAY, DID YOU FOR-

GET ABOUT THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB? NO? HMMM! THAT'S TOO BAD! 'BYE, NOW... E.C., THAT IS!



# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Here, here! I won't let it that time of the year again. I so me and my idiot editors had a big battle. They wanted to cut my column to make room for the annual "who-owns-what" hogwash. But we finally decided to stick it on the test page. I threatened to cut off their supply of chloophyll. . . the sninkers. They turned green! So now, without further ado, let's dig into the mail bag and compile the latest additions to the E.C. Horror Hit Parade, as submitted by the following tetchy-title-twisters: R and S Richie of Chicago, Ill.; Carole Jean Peck of Three Rivers, Mass.; Leonard E. Eckert of Marysville, Calif.; Hilare Bopray of Green Bay, Wis.; Jerry Granoso of Corning, N.Y.; Jerry Hanna of New Castle, Pa.; Michael Protantuno and Tom De-Deo of Newark, N.J.; Sally Hodges and friends of Fort Clayton, Canal Zone; and I J Spina of N.Y.C.

DO NOT CREMATE ME, OH MY DARLING  
I'VE GOT YOUR BLOOD TO KEEP ME WARM  
I'LL BE DOWN TO EAT YOU IN A TAXI, YUMMY!  
I SAW MOMMY EATING SANTA'S CLAWS  
IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOMB  
DON'T DRAIN ME  
MY OLD KENTUCKY CRONE  
HACK IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD  
DON'T SPIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE  
JUST ANOTHER CROAKER  
THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR YOUR SON'S EYES  
I DON'T CARE IF THE SUN DON'T SHINE  
IF I EAT MY LOVERS IN THE EVENIN' TIME!  
CUT HER UP A LITTLE CLOSER  
THRUST IN ME  
I'M FUKING OVER THE FOUR STIFFS OF DOVER  
DROWNED IN THE OLD BILGE STREAM  
I WILL BREAK YOUR BACK AGAIN, KATHLEEN  
SOMEBODY STOLE MY GUTS  
A-CRUNCHING WE WILL GO  
I'M SLITTING THE TOP OF A GIRL

Joe Malone of Brooklyn and Dan Voothees of Los Angeles suggest the following vampire vocalists to warble the above disgusting ditties:

EDDIE SQUISHER  
DINAH GORE  
LIZ FALL-BEARER  
MEL TURE-ME  
ETHEL MURDER-MAN  
ROSEMARY SLEW ME  
BOIL EYES

Putrid Poetry Dept.: Sickly Sandy of Willow Grove, Pa. dashes off this one to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean":

## PAUL, PLEASE

My stomach is in a commotion,  
My head's hanging over the rail. . .  
I don't want to mess up the ocean  
So somebody bring me a Paul!

Bobby McMahon of Deconer, Ill. pens this prize:

When a vampire goes out at night  
He sure don't go out to fly a kite!  
He goes out searching, and then he drains  
And leaves his victim with empty veins!

or  
Down in the valley, the valley so red  
Hang your neck over and I'll cut off your head

Stan Grossman of Detroit, Mich. sends us this parody.

Mary had a little lamb  
It went with her to school  
One day the lamb came home alone  
It really was a ghoul!

John Chapin of Houston, Texas dreams up this delicious delight:

Blood and guts all over the street  
And me without a spoon to eat

And now for some missives from the not-so-artistic

Dear Old Crane,  
I and my friend have a boast to make. By the time this is printed, I will have 160 E.C.'s and my friend will have 170. I think we have two of the largest collections of E.C. mags in the United States. If there are any people who have more, I would like to hear from them.  
Norman Benedict  
Matt Flynn  
1413 Rosemary  
Columbia, Mo.

This sounds like a trap.

Dear Old Witch,  
It always seemed kind of strange that everytime anything happens in your books, somebody says, "Good Lord!" I thought it was kind of silly, but it seems that recently everyone's been saying it.  
Paul Cummins  
Salina, Kansas

Power of the press, Paul!

Dear Old Ugly,  
Every month, I look forward to the story drawn by Ghostly Graham Ingels. I think he's swell because half his characters look like my relatives.  
Mory Little  
N.Y.C.

You poor lershlugger kid!

And now for the advertising (If ya ain't got any money, don't bother reading the rest of this lershlugger column!) In case you didn't catch E.C.'s two 3-D magazines while they were languishing on the newsstands, the stockroom is now bulging with millions of copies for you unfortunate people who missed them! And have my idiot editors got an offer for YOU! You can now obtain THREE DIMENSIONAL E.C. CLASSICS (original newsstand price: 25c) or THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR (also for the absurd price of 15c each . . . or the special combined price of 2 for 30c. This is 3-D like you never saw 3-D before . . . or since! Subscriptions (in 2-D) for the HAUNT OF FEAR will lower your financial worth by one buck for eight flat issues. The address for 3-D orders, subscription orders, and the other stuff like what you been sending in is:

The Old Witch  
Room 705, Dept. 23  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y. 12, N.Y.

## ORIGINAL LETTERS PAGE

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# WITCH WATCHERS COOKBOOKS

If you've been finding it a bit difficult cooking something flesh and appealing for your famished fright family and have been looking for something special to spice up your next lurid literary luncheon, then we suggest you shiver-chefs subscribe to our next batch of E.C. fiction.

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It's too bad you can't be here to get a whiff of the things that are brewing for our forthcoming feasts in fetid fiction, but you'll have to wait like all the other starved subscribers.

So... if you can't stand the thought of missing a single rancid recipe from the E.C. cauldron, then tighten up that burial bib, wipe off those drops of drool, and send in today.

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# In This Issue



FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO  
**THE HAUNT OF**



NO. 24  
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10¢

# FEAR<sup>®</sup>

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER





# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HUNGRY, HIDEY? GOOD! THEN GET INTO MY HAUNT OF FEAR AND I'LL FEED YOU A WHOLE MEAL OF MOP-BROTH FROM MY PUTRID PANTRY. HOW'S ABOUT A PORTION OF BE-BOP SEA FOOD... CRAB MIXED-UP SQUID? NO? THEN CURDLE UP A LITTLE CLOSER AND I'LL FEED YOU MY LATEST SHOUL-LASH... A SLURP STEW ABOUT MOUNTAIN MOONSHINE AND A CREEP WHO BUZZLED SO MUCH OF THE STUFF, HE ENDED UP A DRUNKEN DRIP. WHAT'S SO HORRIBLE ABOUT ENDING UP AS A DIMP, YOU ASK? WELL, OPEN YOUR SNEE-ING LITTLE NOOSES AND YOU'LL SEE! I CALL THIS FOUL FARE...

**DRINK TO ME  
ONLY WITH  
THINE EYES...**



NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, BETSY HAD WATCHED HER HUSBAND, JAKE WATSON, DRINK FROM THE BROWN EARTHENWARE JUG. JAKE WAS AN EXPERT, WITH THE JUG FROM LONG YEARS OF DEVOTED PRACTICE, NEVER SPILLING A DROP OF THE PRECIOUS LIQUID. THE BURNING FLUID HAD BURGLED ENDLESSLY DOWN HIS THROAT, AS IF HE'D HAD A THIRST THAT HE COULD NEVER QUENCH...



BLUK... BLUK... BLUK... HMMMM!

MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, FIRING HIS BLOOD, THE CHEAP MOUNTAIN SWILL WOULD BRING OUT THE BEAST IN JAKE. HE WOULD TURN ANGRY, BLOOD-SHOT EYES ON HIS WOMAN AND HAVE HIS RIGHTFUL WAY WITH HER...



BETHY WOULD END UP BRUISED AND SORE, BARELY ABLE TO CRAWL INTO HER BED.



YET SHE'D NEVER KEPT THE JER FROM HIM... NEVER TRIED TO HIDE IT OR CLAIM THEY COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY MORE. IN FACT, LIKE A DUTIFUL WIFE, SHE'D ALWAYS FLED HIM WITH THE SWILL, REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES.



HIS URGENT ARMS WOULD ALMOST CRACK HER NECK. HE WOULD PANT AND GASP, BREATHING HEAVY PUFFS INTO HER FACE, AND MUMBLE HIS ANIMAL WANTS TO HER.



TO THOSE PASSING BY, IT WAS NO THING OUT OF THE ORDINARY. THE CRIES... THE THROES OF HAND FISTS ON SOFT FLESH... WERE A TIME-HONORED CUSTOM AMONG THE MOUNTAIN-FOLK...



SOMETIMES THE LIQUOR WOULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT ON JAKE, AND HE WOULD BRAB BETHY WITH A DIFFERENT OBJECTIVE...



IT WAS THOSE TIMES THAT BETHY WOULD BREAD THE MOOF. SHE ALMOST PREFERRED THE BEASTNESS. SHE COULD HARDLY BEAR HIS GLOSSBERING KISSES. HARDLY CHOKED DOWN HER UTTER LOATHING AND DISGUST... HER HATE...





BETHY DID NOT DARE RUN AWAY, FOR THERE WERE TIMES WHEN JAKE WOULD WIFE HIS THICK LIPS ACROSS HIS DIRTY SLEEVE AND THREATEN...

SEE MY WOMAN, GALL, IT'S EVER YOU FORCED UP WITH ANOTHER MAN, I'D KILL FOR BOTH. JIMMY YER BRAINS OUT WITH MAN JUS THAT'S WHAT I'D DO...

YES, JAKE!



CLEM WOULD HAND HER A FRESHLY FILLED JUS FROM HIS WAGON AND TAKE AWAY THE EMPTY...

JUS' KEEP FEEDIN' HIM THIS ROTTEN CORN LIKKER. IT DON DOBT ME NUTHIN'. AH MAKE IT IN MAN DRY STILL. LET HIM DROWN HISSSELF IN IT! LET HIM DRINK HISSSELF T' DEATH!

YES, CLEM! I'LL FEED HIM MORE... MORE... MORE...



SO WHEN CLEM CAME...

THE LIKKER AMT LIKKIN' HIM, CLEM! CAN'T WE GET RID OF HIM FASTER?

AH GOT AN IDEE, BETHY? BRING HIM OVER T'SEE MAN SPILL TONIGHT. IT'S BACK O' BRUNK WILL I?



BETHY KNEW HOW TO GET JAKE TO THE STILL EASILY ENOUGH. SHE LIED.

EMPTY? WHY DIDN'T CLEM BRING A JUS TODAY?

REVENGE'S AROUND, JAKE. CLEM'S SCARED T' DELIVER. WE GOTTA GO GET IT. OURSELVES!



BUT BETHY WAS 'FETCHED UP' WITH ANOTHER MAN... CLEM PARKER, THE MAN WHO SUPPLIED JAKE WITH HIS PRECIOUS MOONSHINE. BETHY AND CLEM HAD IT ALL FIGURED OUT. HE'D COME TO DELIVER HIS WARES DURING THE DAY, WHEN JAKE WAS AWAY.

OH, CLEM? IF I COULD ONLY RUN AWAY WITH YOU... TODAY... NOW. BUT HE'D FOLLER US... HE'D KILL US BOTH. I KNOW HIM!

WE WON'T HAVE T' RUN AWAY, HONEY!



IT HAD BEEN A YEAR NOW, AND JAKE HAD SHOWN NO SIGNS OF WEAKENING UNDER THE RIVER OF BURN HE SWALLOWED CASUALLY...

SEE, BETHY! LONG OF WOOD FASTER'N EVER THAT'S GOOD CORN LIKKER WE GOT FROM CLEM. IT'S MAKIN' ME STRONGER ALL THE TIME, BY GAW!

IF THAT AXE I WOULD ONLY SLIP... JUST ONCE?



IT WAS A ROUGH TRAIL PAST THE FURN, THROUGH THE THORN-PATCH, UP OVER THE ROCKS TO THE STILL BACK OF BRUNK HILL. JAKE CURSED ALL THE WAY, BUT HIS THIRST MADE HIM GO FASTER... FASTER...

I SNEEZE IT NOW, BETHY! C'MON! C'MON, YUH CRIPPIN' TURTLE.

I'M COMIN'... GAW, JAKE!



GLENN WAS WAITING, SHOT-GUN IN HAND.



WHO'S THERE? STOP OR AM I SHOOT?

IT'S ME, GLENN! JAKE AND ME!

QUICK, GLENN! GIVE ME A DRINK! I'M SPITTIN' COTTON!

JAKE LED HIS GUESTS INTO THE SHED, POINTING TO A ROW OF JARS.



HELP YOURSELF, JAKE! AN WHILE YER HERE, COME ON IN BACK AN' SEE THE STILL. AH MAKE THE BEST STUFF IN THESE PARTS, I'VE AH HAPTA SAY SO MYSELF!

LEAD TH' WAY, GLENN!

BEHIND THE SHED, IN A CLEARING, THE STILL STOOD SILHOUETTED IN THE MOONLIGHT.



THERE'S THE MASH COOKIN' AND OVER THERE'S THE POT WHERE IT'S DISTILLED OUT. WANTA TAKE A LOOK, JAKE? THERE'S MORE LIQUOR IN THERE THAN YOU'LL EVER GUZZLE...

LE'S SEE?

JAKE'S EYES GLANCED GREEDILY AS HE STARED DOWN INTO THE BIG VAT FULL OF THE FIERY LIQUID HIS THROAT CRAVED. AND HE SPOKE WORDS WHICH HAD A SIGNIFICANCE HE WOULD SHORTLY DISCOVER.



LORDY, THAT'S BEEZYBUTIFUL STUFF! AH COULD SWIM IN IT!

JAKE STRUGGLED WILDLY, TRYING TO CLAW BACK UP THE SMOOTH CLAY SIDES OF THE VAT...AS THE TWO LOVERS WATCHED AND LAUGHED. FINALLY HE SLIPPED, SCREAMING, BELOW THE BURNING SURFACE. ONCE, A HAND GRIPPED, CLUTCHING UP AT THE MOUNTAIN NIGHT.



WE DID LIKE WE SAID, GLENN! WE LET HIM DRINK MYSELF IN IT!

STRONG HANDS PUSHED JAKE OVER THE VAT BRIM.



HELP YOURSELF, JAKE!

IT'S ALL YOURS, JAKE!

YAAAAAHHHH!

THE HAND VANISHED ONLY BUBBLES AROSE. JAKE HADN'T FELL AT LAST...IN HIS THROAT...HIS STOMACH...HIS LUNGS. SOON, HIS BLOATED CORPSE ROSE TO THE SURFACE...BLOODSHOT EYES STARRING...MUTE WITNESSES TO THE DRINKING BOUT WITH DEATH...



THE BODY, GLENN! YOUR MEN REE IT TOMORROW...

DON'T WORRY. AH THOUGHT OF EVERYTHIN'! THE BACK OF LIFE WILL TAKE CARE O' THAT. EAT THE BODY UP ALL NIGHT, EVEN THE BONES. THERE'LL BE NOTHIN' LEFT O' JAKE BY MORNIN'!

AFTER GLEN HAD POURED THE LYE INTO THE VAT, HE AND BETHY WENT BACK TO THE SHED...



THE COOLING LIQUID DRIPPED EARTHWARD FORMING A PUDDLE IN THE SOIL. BELOW THE VAT STANDING SILENTLY IN THE DESERTED MOUNTAIN CLEARING.

GLEN SNATCHED A JAR FULL OF MOONSHINE, AND HE AND BETHY HURRIED, ARM AND ARM, TO THE CABIN WHERE JAKE WOULD DRINK NO MORE.



IT WAS A STRANGE PUDDLE... SLIMY AND VISCIOUS. IT DID NOT SOAK INTO THE DIRT AS AN ORDINARY LIQUID WOULD. IT LAY THERE... SHIMMERING... BUBBLING... AND THEN, TOWARD DAWN, IT MOVED...



LAUGHTER RANG OUT FROM WITHIN JAKE'S CABIN... GIGGLING PERSON-ATE LAUGHTER, PUNCTUATED BY SWIGS OF MOONSHINE. WHILE OUT PAST GRASSY HILL, THE SILENCE OF THE BRANK OVERHUNG THE DESERTED STILL... SILENCE BROKEN ONLY BY THE STEADY DRIP-DRIP FROM THE LOOSE SPIGOT OF THE VAT...



IT MOVED AS IF IT WERE ALIVE... AS IF, PERHAPS, THE LYE, BY DISSOLVING LIVING TISSUE LONG IMPREGNATED AND NOW SUBMERGED IN-A FRODOPTIVELY ALCOHOL BATH, HAD CREATED A LOATHSOME FORM OF CREEPING LIQUID LIFE...



IT SLID AND SLURRED SLOWLY ALONG LIKE A HUGE SNAIL OR SLUG THAT HAD CRAWLED OUT FROM BENEATH SOME SLIMY ROCK. AND IT SEEMED TO HAVE A DESTINATION. IT LEFT THE CLEARING, CLIMBED OVER THE HILL, SLITHERED SMOOTHLY OVER THE ROCKS,



...THROUGH THE THORNY GROWTHS... PAST THE FENCE - AND ON TO THE HOUSE WHOSE LIGHTS STILL GLEAMED INTO THE COOLING DARK...



"NOW, BETHY? ISN' ALMOOSH 'JIS ONE MORNING? WE'VE SHELEBRATED MORE DRINK, ALL AGOBT? NOW, LESH... GLEN!"

THE CREEPING HORROR PAUSED OUTSIDE THE HOUSE WHERE THE DRUNKEN LAUGHTER OF A MAN AND A WOMAN... ITS WOMAN, DRIFTED OUT. AND IT WAITED. IT WAITED PATIENTLY UNTIL WHAT IT NEEDED CROSSED ITS PATH... THEN...



OUTSIDE, THE RACCOON'S SCREAMS DIED TO A GURGling DEATH BATTLE. CLEM STUMBLED ABOUT IN THE DARK DAWN, SEARCHING FOR THE HIDDEN TRAP. AND THEN HE HEARD THE SOUND... BEHIND HIM... THE HORRIFYING GURGling SLITHERING SOUND.



CLEM WHIRLED... GASED... STOOD ROOTED IN PARALYZED TERROR AT WHAT HE SAW GLINTING IN THE DAWN'S LIGHT, GEMMING LIKE JELLY... SLITHERING TOWARD HIM... INSTINCTIVELY, HE RAISED HIS RIFLE... FIRED AGAIN AND AGAIN.



THE RIFLE BLAZES TORN INTO THE FLESHY SLIME, SPATTERING ORBULETS WHICH QUICKLY REFORMED WITH THE MAIN BODY. BUT THE HOLES CLOSED BEHIND THE BULLETS WITH A SOFT SUCKING SOUND. THE THING DID NOT STOP... DID NOT EVEN SLOW DOWN. IT KEPT COMING! CLEM RAISED HIS FOOT TO STAMP AT IT AS IT FLOWED RABEELY TOWARD HIS BOOTS. THAT WAS HIS MISTAKE.



BETHY CAME RUNNING, SUMMONED BY THE BLOOD-CURLING SOUNDS OF HER NEW MAN. OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM. CLEM WAS HALF-GONE NOW, SINKING INTO THE SLIMY POOL. SHE LOOKED... HORRIFIED... AND THEN SHE SAW THE TWO BLOOD-SHOT EYES...



BETHY REACHED FOR HER MAN, PULLED AT THE ONLY THING SHE COULD GRASP... CLEM'S HAIR.



SHE FLUNG THE DRIPPING SCALP AT THE TWO EYES THAT GLARED SALE-FALLY AT HER FROM THE SLIME. SHE TURNED AND STUMBLED BACK INTO THE CABIN, SLAMMING THE DOOR.



BUT SHE HAD NO TIME TO BE SICK, FOR THE CLOSED DOOR DID NOT SHUT OUT THE CRIPING FLUID HORROR...



SHE LOOKED ABOUT WILDLY, TORE THE BLANKET FROM THE BED, AND STUFFED IT INTO THE DOOR CRACK...



FRANTICALLY, THEN, SHE SCURRIED ABOUT THE CABIN, STUFFING EACH CRACK, EACH CRACK THROUGH WHICH THE LIQUID MONSTROSITY MIGHT BE ABLE TO FLOW...



THE BLOODSHOT EYES BURNED AT HER THROUGH THE WINDOW, FLOODING UPWARD IN THE VISCIDUS LIQUID, SHE REACHED THE BROKEN PANE JUST IN TIME...



AN HOUR LATER, SUNLIGHT STREAMED IN THROUGH THE WINDOW. IT WAS MORNING. SHE'D EAT, RUSSELED IN MISERY, SICK, WAITING, AND NOW SHE'D WON. SHE'D KEPT OUT THE VISCIDUS REVOLTING FORM THAT WAS ONCE HER HUSBAND. HER COURAGE FLOWED BACK...



SHE HEARD A RUSTLING ON THE ROOF, STIRRED UP THE FIRE—HEARD OR MORE LOOS...



SHE LOOKED AT THE POT OF WATER HANGING BY THE FIREPLACE, STEAMING AND BUBBLING. SHE FELT SUD-DENTLY GRABLY AND VILE AND DIRTY FROM WHAT SHE'D SEEN AND WHAT SHE'D DONE DURING THE NIGHT...



SHE POURED THE BOILING WATER INTO THE DORTED AND RUSTED METAL TANK SHE USED AS A BATH-TUB.



THINK I'LL HEAD UP NORTH... TO THE CITY

SHE PUMPED COLD WATER FROM THE SINK PUMP INTO THE EMPTIED POT.



AM! BOOL IF OFF A LITTLE

CARRIED IT TO THE TUB... AND DUMPED IT IN. SHE NEVER NOTICED HOW IT POURED... HOW IT SEEMED TO RUTHER OUT OF THE POT...



POOR GLENN BUT I CAN'T THINK OF HIM NOW! GOT TO THINK OF MY FUTURE THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF MEN IN THE CITY LOOKIN' FOR A GAL WITH WHAT I'VE GOT...

SHE SLIPPED OFF HER SHABBY DRESS... STEPPED INTO THE TUB... AND SCREAMED



EEEEAAAAAHHH!

SHE FOUGHT WILDLY, SHRIEKING AT THE CHASTLY MALEVOLENCE THAT ENVELOPED HER IN ITS BURNING STICKY EMBRACE AND SLOWLY DRAGGED HER DOWN WITH A STRENGTH SHE HAD KNOWN BEFORE ONLY TOO WELL...



THE WELL-WATER? HE BOY IN THROUGH THE PUMPY JAKE!

JAKE! PLEASE...

EEEEEEEE GGGHHH!

HER GURGLES SCREAM FADED AWAY AND THE TURBID LIQUID ROLLED A MOMENT... AND THEN IT, TOO, QUIETED. AND THERE WAS SILENCE.

BUT NOT THE SILENCE OF DEATH! NOT THAT MERCIFUL FINALITY OF TWO SMALL OBJECTS BORNED TO THE SURFACE TO FLOAT BESIDE THE BLOOD-SHOT ONES.



AND AS THE SLUTTERING LIQUID SUCKED OUT OF THE TUB, QUINNED ACROSS THE CABIN FLOOR, AND REACHED A SHAPELESS BLDE-ARM UPWARD FOR THE BROWN EARTHWEN-WARE JUG, BETHY KNEW THAT SHE COULD NEVER AGAIN ESCAPE JAKE'S HATED EMBRACE...



SO IF YOU'RE UP IN THE JACKSONS SOME NIGHT, RIDGIES, AND YOU HEAR A SLOPPING REACTION OF 'LITTLE BROWN JUG'...



QUINN! COULD YOU KNOW WHO'S COMING THE GURGLES BETHY AND JAKE... THE HAPPY CU-POOL! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE KILLERKEEPER WHO'S WAITING TO CURE YOUR BLEED. I'LL BE FEEDIN' YOU LATER. 'EYE NOW!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

COME IN, CREEPS! IF YOUR OLD MAN WON'T COME ALONG, THEN DROP DAD! HEH, HEH! YEP... IT'S YOUR FAULT-KEEPER MAN, WHITING YOU INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR FOR ANOTHER REVOLTING READINGS FROM MY GRAPPLY COLLECTION OF TERROR TOMES. I CALL THIS YELP-YARN...

## ...ONLY SIN DEEP

NIGHT SPOOLED THE CITY. THE MAN LAY IN THE DARKNESS OF THE ALLEY, UNWARE IN HIS ALCOHOLIC STUPOR OF THE FILTERING HANDS THAT ROLLED HIM FOR THE SKIMPY TREASURE IN HIS POCKETS. HIS WATCH SHOWN IN A YELLOW GLEAM, WATCHING THE BLAZE OF THE WOMAN'S CALCULATING EYES. SHE LAUGHED AT THIS WILE PICK-UP OF AN EVENING. MEN WERE HER FOOLS, HER PREY, HER PREY IN THIS GRIM GAME OF LIFE. LORNA WASON LAUGHED AGAIN IN A THROATY PURR... AS A TIGRESS OVER HER KILL.



"THANKS, BUSTER!  
THANKS A LOT!"



SHE MOVED THROUGH THE NIGHT, BEASTED OF HER PREDICIOUS OCCUPATION, SCREAMING OF BIGGER PREY. SHE HAD THE ONE THING THAT SOLD HIGH AMONG MEN: BEAUTY. BEAUTY TO DRIVE MEN WILD. INNOCENT, WIDE-EYED MADONNA! BEAUTY, MASKING THE GREEDINESS BENEATH. BEAUTY THAT MADE MEN TURN AND LOOK AND LUST.

"HELLO, HONEY!  
LOWESOME?"

"DROP DEAD,  
BUSTER! I'M  
BUSY..."



SHE WOULD HAVE NONE OF THEM NOW... NOT ANY MORE... NOT IF SHE COULD SELL HER BEAUTY FOR WHAT IT WAS REALLY WORTH... AT ITS HIGHEST PRICE... TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER. BUT BEAUTY LIKE HERS WAS NO GOOD HIDDEN IN PAIS, BURIED IN POVERTY, LIKE A JEWEL, OBSCURED IN A DULL, LEADER SETTING.



WHAT I NEED IS A STAKE. JANCY CLOTHES... A BEAUTY SHOP TREATMENT... THE WORKS! AND THIS WATCH CAN GET IT FOR ME...

THE FURNISHING SHE FOUND WAS A HOLE IN THE WALL... MUSTY AND DECREPT... AND ITS PROPRIETOR SEEMED JUST AS MUSTY AND DECREPT AS HE RUBBED HIS GRARLED HANDS BRISKLY, TAKING HER OFFERING... ONLY TO Toss IT BACK AT HER IN SCORN...



FRANK WORTHLESS! IMITATION GOLD. IT BELONGS IN A JUNKYARD. OUT OF PIKE, I'LL GIVE YOU A DOLLAR FOR IT!

A DOLLAR IS THAT ALL?

ALL HER DREAMS TUMBELED, EXPECTING SO MUCH MORE. SHE TURNED AWAY, HER LOVELY FACE TWISTED IN BITTER PAIN. BUT EVEN THAT DID NOT HIDE ITS CLASSIC PERFECTION. THE OLD FARM-DIGGER CALLED HER BACK... HIS EYES NARROWING.



WAIT! YOUR FACE! LOVELY BROWN EYES... SPUN-SILVER HAIR... LISTEN. I HAVE A PROPOSITION...

AT YOUR AGE, GRANDFATHERS, I LIKE 'EM WITH BOTH FEET OUT OF THE GRAVE...

NO, YOU LITTLE FOOL. YOU MISUNDERSTAND. ONE MY ONLY MISTRESS IS MONEY... ALWAYS FAITHFUL AND TRUSTWORTHY. THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS! I OFFER YOU ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR YOUR BEAUTY. IS IT A BARGAIN?



ONE THOUSAND? GULP... DID YOU SAY ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS?

SHE THOUGHT HIM MAD, BUT HE COUNTED OUT THE MONEY BEFORE HER EYES. THEN HE LED HER INTO THE BACK ROOM AND SEATED HER IN A CHAIR...



YOU MEAN... MMFF... ALL YOU WANT IS THIS WAX MOLD OF MY FACE?

YES, MY DEAR. CALL IT A HOBBY OF MINE... CAPTURING BEAUTY LIKE YOURS...

SHE DID NOT LIKE HIS FINAL CACKLING WORDS AS HE HANDED HER A WAX TICKET, BUT SHE PUT IT DOWN TO THE FOLLIES OF THE AGES...



...IN CASE YOU EVER WISH TO REDEEM YOUR BEAUTY!

OLD FOOL...

SHE ABSENTLY STUCK THE TICKET INTO HER PURSE AS SHE LEFT THE FOOLISH OLD MAN'S SHOP...



BUT THE LAUGHING MAN. I'VE GOT ONE GRAND! I'VE GOT MY STAKE!



EXCITING DAYS FOLLOWED FOR LORNA. PREPARING THE LURE, THE SEDUCTIVE BAIT FOR THE HUNT TO FOLLOW... THE DEADLY FEMALE ON THE PROWL... THE GREATEST GAME IN HISTORY...



I'LL TAKE THIS DRESS, MADAM SONYA...

DO A GOOD JOB, SMILE...

NOW YOU'RE READY, BABY...

THE BORED GOORMAN OF THE SWANK CLUB IT! SWUNG OPEN A TALL DOOR ONE EVENING. HE'D SEEN AN ENDLESS PARADE OF BEAUTIES TRAIPSE INTO THE CLUB DURING HIS YEARS AND NONE HAD RATED MORE THAN HALF A GLANCE TO HIS SATED EYES. BUT THAT NIGHT, HIS EYES SNAPPED WIDE...



GASP! A VISION! I FEEL SORRY FOR THE OTHER GAMES HERE! THEIR EVENING IS RUINED THE MOMENT THIS STUNNING BEAUTY MARCHES IN!

HEADS TURNED AROUND AS LORNA WAS CONDUCTED TO A TABLE. WOMEN'S FACES FLASHED... STILL SMILING... WITH HATE FLASHING BENEATH. HATE FOR THIS CREATURE WHO SUDDENLY TURNED THEM INTO SLOWLY FRUSTRATED IN COMPARISON.



MORE CHAMPAGNE, CHARLEY? ER... CHARLEY? CHARLEY?

OH, SNAUT UP! LET ME DRIVE THAT IN!

BUT LORNA IGNORED THEM ALL! HER PREY WAS PICKED... JONNIE ALTHOUGH... BARGAINED PLAYBOY, HUMAN GOLD-MINE. HE WAS ALWAYS THERE WITH HIS FOLLOWINGS OF SMUG OWNED MISS AMERICAS. BUT LORNA WAS GLAD THEY WERE THERE. SHE NEEDED THEM, AS A COMEDIAN NEEDS A STRAIGHT MAN.



HEY! I KNOW! I KNOW! WHEN EVERY GEORGEIOUS GOLL YOU IN THIS TOWN. HOW DID I MISS FOR, BABY?

SHE STRUCK HIM HARD... THIS MAN SHE WANTED TO WIN AND MARRY. SHE BRUISED HIS CHEEK AND LEFT THE DEEPER BRUISE OF ANGRY HUMILIATION INSIDE.



GASP!

DESPIicable WOLF.

BUT LORNA HAD PLAYED HER GAME WITH AGE-OLD SHREWDNESS... WITH WOMANLY WILE. FOR SHE KNEW THAT, TO WIN, THE FORGOTTEN FRUIT PROMISED ALWAYS THE SMILEST TASTE...



GET LOST, TRASH! I WANT TO MEET THAT ANGEL! NO EARTHLY GIRL COULD BE SO LOVELY!

HERE HE COMES MY FOOL... WAS THERE EVER ANY DOUBT?

IT TOOK LORNA SIX MONTHS OF HARD WORK... ALWAYS LEAVING WITH HER GAIN... TO GET HER QUARRY PENNED. BUT AT LAST...



LORNA, MONEY AND LIPS HAVE TASTED THE SAME SINCE YOURS? I MUST HAVE THEM FOR MY OWN! FOR LIFE! MARRY ME!

OH, JONNIE! YES! YES, I'LL MARRY YOU!

AND SO... WEDDING BELLS... THE HONEYMOON... AND LORNA MOVED INTO THE EARTHLY PARADISE SHE'D ALWAYS DREAMED... MISTRESS OF A MANSION FULL OF SERVANTS, WEALTH, AND LUXURIES. RONNIE, DEEPLY IN LOVE, SHOWERED HER WITH COSTLY GIFTS. AND LORNA LOVED DEEPLY IN RETURN. HIS **BANK ACCOUNT**, THAT IS...

OH, YOU WONDERFUL, SWEET DARLING! BREATH OF SPRING WIND! IT'S BEAUTIFUL!

IT'S THE **WIND'S** SHADE... AND HERE'S SOMETHING ELSE TO GILD THE LILY TROUBLE IS, EVEN DIAMONDS LOOK CHEAP AGAINST YOUR RADIANT BEAUTY...



SCOURGE IN THE LAP OF LUXURY, LORNA WINKED AT HER MIRROR EACH NIGHT. BUT ONE NIGHT SHE FROWNED... LOOKED AGAIN IN PERPLEXITY... THEN A THIRD TIME, IN WORRY...

WRINKLES ON MY FACE? BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I'M **YOUNG**! I'M ONLY TWENTY-THREE. OH, I SLEPT POORLY LAST NIGHT. IT MUST BE THAT. **FROWN** LINES. THEY'LL BE GONE TOMORROW.



BUT THEY WEREN'T GONE THE NEXT MORNING... OR THE NEXT... OR MANY NEXTS... UNTIL LORNA KNEW THAT SOMETHING **DISASTROUS** WAS HAPPENING TO HER YOUTHFUL FACE. AND THE OLD SAYING CAME TO TORMENT HER... "**BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP**."



WORSE AND WORSE... ALMOST LIKE THE WRINKLES OF **OLD AGE**? EYE... I'VE GOT TO **HIDE** IT FROM RONNIE! THANK GOODNESS HE'S GOING AWAY FOR A FEW DAYS. I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE A **DOCTOR**...

WELL, NOW! I'LL SEE YOU THURSDAY! I... THEY AREN'T YOU **OVERDOING** THE HOUSE AND POWDER, LORNA? IT'S A **WASTE**, REALLY. WITH SUCH LOVELY, SMOOTH, PEACH-BLOSSOM SKIN LIKE YOURS. TO **HIDE** ITS **NATURAL BEAUTY**?



AS SOON AS RONNIE LEFT, LORNA CALLED THE BEST SKIN MAN IN THE CITY.



I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU, DOCTOR! YES! **FOURDAY MORNING?** FINE! I'LL BE THERE!

LORNA'S UNREALISTIC HOPE DURING THE EXAMINATION. MODERN SCIENCE COULD CURE ALMOST ANY SKIN AFFLICTION. BUT WHEN THE DERMATOLOGIST TURNED WITH PUDDLED EYES, AND WHISPERED...



QUICK! SOMETHING YOUR **FACIAL TISSUES** ARE **AGING**... AGING AT A MUCH **FASTER** RATE THAN YOUR **BODY**. YOUR SKIN IS... WELL... **DYING**! THE **CURE**, YOU FOOL! I'M **RIGHT**! I'LL PAY **ANYTHING**...

HEAVILY VEILED, LORNA LEFT HIS OFFICE. HIS HELPLESS REPLY BOOMING LIKE A BOMB OF DOOM IN HER MIND. OVER AND OVER...



**NO CURE! NO CURE AT ALL!** SCIENCE HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO **HALT** THE **AGING PROCESS**. NO DOCTOR CAN STOP YOUR SKIN FROM **DYING**...

WHY HAD THIS HAPPENED TO HER...HER OF ALL WOMEN? WHY? SUDDENLY, LORNA REMEMBERED! THAT NIGHT...THAT NIGHT SO LONG AGO, FRANTICALLY SHE RUSHED HOME, SEARCHED AMONG HER PERSONAL CDS, AND ENDS, AND FINALLY FOUND IT...



THAT OLD WRETCH...  
HIS FUNNY WAY OF SAYING  
IT...BUTTER MY BEAUTY...  
AND THIS TICKET...MY  
BEAUTY PAIRED...  
REDEEMABLE...JUST  
AS IF HE REALLY TOOK  
IT AWAY SOMEHOW!

SHE PUSHED THE PARNTICKET INTO HER PURSE AND HURRIED  
OUT INTO THE NIGHT...DOWN CRACKED DESERTED STREETS...

IT CAN'T BE! IT'S SILLY! BLACK MAGICK! YET, I HOPE  
IT'S TRUE! THEN I CAN REDEEM MY BEAUTY! LUCKY  
I KEPT THIS OLD PAPER TICKET! LET'S SEE...HIS SHOP  
WAS AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE...



FINALLY, SHE FOUND THE DILAPIDATED OLD SHOP, THUS  
OPEN THE CREAMY DOOR, AND STUMBLED INTO ITS  
UNKEMPT MUSTY CLOOM, STILL PRESIDED OVER BY THE  
EVIL HUMAN SPIDER WHO HAD BARGAINED SO CUNNINGLY  
WITH HER A YEAR AND A MILLION DOLLARS AGO. SHE  
RIPPED OFF HER VEIL, IN FURY, EXPOSING THE PREGNANT  
MONSTROSITY THAT NOW REPOSED ON HER YOUNG LOVELY  
SHOULDER...

DID YOU DO THIS TO ME,  
YOU FILTHY LITTLE OLD  
FOOL? DID YOU?

CERTAINLY WHIGGERS, SEET!  
HERE'S YOUR BEAUTY...  
AMONG MY PAIRED HAIRS.



HERE? HERE'S YOUR  
THOUSAND DOLLARS.  
I MUST HAVE MY BEAUTY  
BACK! I MUST!

BUT, MY DEAR! THAT'S  
IMPOSSIBLE! THE DATE!  
YOU FORGOT! THE FINAL  
DATE TO REDEEM WAS  
JANUARY 13TH! YESTER-  
DAY! YOU'RE TOO LATE!



OF COURSE, YOU CAN  
BUY YOUR BEAUTY  
BACK! BUT AT MY  
PRICE, NOW! LET'S  
SEE! AS WHO WOULD  
ALFIELD BE, YOU SHOULD  
BE ABLE TO AFFORD  
LET'S SEE...\$100,000!

WHAT? \$100,000?  
HOW COULD  
I ASK MY  
HUSBAND  
FOR THAT  
MUCH OUT  
OF THE CLEAR  
BLUE SKY?  
BESIDES, I'VE  
SAW MY  
FACE NOW.

YES, HE'D OBLIGE YOU!  
HE'D TURN FROM YOUR  
HAIR FACE AND BE BACK  
ON THE FLOOR AND KICK  
YOU OUT! SO, THINK IT  
OVER. BUSINESS IS  
BUSINESS! \$100,000!  
NOT ONE CENT LESS!  
GOOD NIGHT.

PLEASE  
OR  
PLEASE.



SHE STOOD OUTSIDE THE SHOP, SHY-  
ERING IN THE COLD. AND THEN, SHE  
THOUGHT OF A WAY...A DEGRADATE  
WAY TO RAISE THE MONEY.

MY JEWELS...MY WAX COATS...  
ALL THE EXPENSIVE GIFTS  
FROM HOME. TOGETHER,  
THEY MIGHT TOTAL \$100,000.  
I'LL TELL HIM WE WERE  
MARRIED...



HIS FACE VEILED, HIDING THE HORROR BEHIND, SHE WAS ABLE TO ENTER HER HOUSE ONLY BECAUSE THE SERVANTS RECOGNIZED HER YOUNG VOICE...

WHO DO YOU THINK IT IS, YOU FOOL? STOP ASLEEP! I'M GOING TO BED! IF ANYBODY CALLS, I'M ASLEEP.

YES, MISS ALTHEA!



IN THE SAFETY OF HER ROOM, WHERE SHE COULD LIFT THE STUFFY VEIL, SHE WASTED NO TIME IN LINGERING UP ALL SHE'D GAINED FROM HER HUSBAND'S GOLDEN GENEROSITY...

HATE TO PART WITH THEM, BUT I MUST GET MY BEAUTY BACK BEFORE RONNIE RETURNS FROM HIS TRIP! I...

HELP! WHAT DOES ON HERE?



SHE'D HEARD HIS VOICE TOO LATE! RONNIE! HE'D RETURNED UNEXPECTEDLY. SHE'D HAD NO CHANCE TO TURN TO RUN, TO HIDE FROM HIS EYES...

GRACE-ON, MY GOD! THAT FACE! UGLY... HORRIBLE! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING RIFLING MY WIFE'S ROOM?



HOW COULD SHE REVEAL SHE WAS LORNA... HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE? NOT THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY! LET HIM THINK HER A *BOYFRIEND*! RONNIE!

NO YOU DON'T, SISTER! I'M HOLDING YOU FOR THE POLICE!



SHE STRUGGLED WITH HIM, REALIZING...

THE POLICE! OH, NO, NO, NO! THEN I'LL BE TRAPPED IN JAIL... NEVER PAY OFF THE FARMHOUSE... NEVER BE ABLE TO PROVE I'M LORNA ALTHEA! NO! THERE'S ONLY ONE OTHER WAY... ONE LAST WAY...



YES! ONE FINAL WAY... ONE FINAL WAY... FOR RONNIE! LORNA REACHED FOR THE HEAVY BRASS STATUETTE...

SO THIS CHUMP HAS TO GIVE SO WHAT! THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET MY BEAUTY BACK... MY GOLDEN ASSET! PLENTY OF OTHER MEN IDIOTS LIKE RONNIE AROUND TO BID FOR IT.



AGAIN AND AGAIN SHE SWUNG HER INSTRUMENT OF MURDER, RONNIE'S FIRST ORGAN SANK TO A GUBBLING MOAN AND THEN FALLOUT TO THE BELCHING GLETS OF A FRESH CORPSE LOSING ITS FLUIDS AND GASES.



SHE LOOKED BACK AT THE STILL FIGURE ONLY ONCE, THEN LEFT BY THE WINDOW WITH ALL THAT REMAINED OF HIS FOULISH LOVE PACKED IN A BUST-CASE...

PERFECT! SIGNS OF A STRAIGHT... ROOM LOOPER... ALL ADDING UP TO HOMICIDAL SURVEILLANCE BY PERSONS UNKNOWN...



SHE HURRIED TO THE PARLORSHOP WITH HER TREASURE...

LOOKED! CLOSED FOR THE NIGHT! NOW I'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL MORNING... FIND A HOTEL!



SHE SLEPT PEACEFULLY! WHY SHOULDN'T SHE? HER PROBLEM WAS SOLVED... HER TROUBLES ALMOST OVER. EARLY IN THE MORNING, SHE LEFT THE HOTEL, ALMOST DAILY...

MORNING PAPER... READ ALL ABOUT THE MURDER! SERVANTS FIND BODY OF RONALD ALTGELD III...

THE SERVANTS? GASP...



SHE'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE SERVANTS. SHE SNATCHED A PAPER... STARED AT THE HEADLINES...

## WANTED! FOR MURDER! MRS. LORNA ALTGELD

IF YOU SEE THIS WOMAN, NOTIFY THE POLICE. SERVANTS HAVE TESTIFIED THAT MRS. ALTGELD RETURNED HOME LAST NIGHT MURDERED BEFORE HER HUSBAND, RONALD. THEY OBSERVED HER LEAVING THE HOUSE VIA THE BEDROOM WINDOW SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEATH. SHE IS KNOWN TO BE WEARING A HEAVY VEIL...



THE POLICEMAN STOOD BEHIND HER, READING OVER HER SHOULDER...

YOU BAD! PRETTY FACE, TOO! NOW IT'S A ONE WAY TICKET TO THE ELECTRIC. ER, SAY, MAM? I'M SORRY! BUT... WELL... I HAVE MY ORDERS...

I UNDERSTAND, OFFICER! YOU WANT ME TO REMOVE MY FACE SO YOU CAN BE SURE I'M NOT THAT... THING MURDERER.



LORNA LIFTED THE VEIL SLOWLY AND WATCHED AS THE POLICEMAN'S FACE PALED AND THEN GAVE SICKLY GREEN AS HE CLAPPED HIS HAND TO HIS MOUTH...

SATISFIED, OFFICER...?

CHORE



AND SHE KNEW THAT SHE COULD NEVER REDEEM HER BEAUTY NOW. SHE KNEW THAT SHE WAS STUCK WITH THIS HORRIBLE MALEFACING HAD-FACE FOR ALL OF HER LIFE... UNLESS SHE WANTED IT TO END... IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR...

WELL, HEN? SO LORNA ENDED UP STUCK WITH A DEAD PAN. WELL, THERE'S MANY A WIFE WHO'LL SAY THE SAME ABOUT THEIR HUSBANDS! NOW IT'S TIME TO TURN YOU BACK TO THE OLD WITCH FOR ONE OF HER JEWELRY SLIME SERVANTS. REMEMBER... IF YOU'RE ADDICTED TO E.C. MASS, IF YOU'RE A REAL GOOD PAN, THEN YOU OUGHT TO JOIN THE E.C. PAN-ADDICT CLUB! WHY? WELL... ER... THAT IS... ER... ALL... ER... ER... LOOK, I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAD, THE HALL OF HORROR! 'BYE, NOW!





## NEST EGG

Carty had wanted him, but still it was a shock when Holloway opened the front door and silently stepped into the house he had come to job. Carty had whispered that the old dump was bursting at seams, stuffed with junk the two brothers had been collecting frenziedly for forty years. Carty was right.

The entryway was so massed with piles of gramy, yellowing papers that Holloway had to slither sideways to get into the front room. Here, sitting cardboard boxes were wedged tightly together, reaching from floor to dust-shrouded ceiling. The dining room was clogged with layers of rags matted into a worry mass, the stench was the odor of decayed clothing stripped from a long-dead corpse.

Holloway wiped the bubbles of sour sweat from under his nose, thinking: *these cracked Cort brothers been holed up in this sminking mansoleum for forty years, and it don't look like they never even threw out one dirty napkin in all that time!*

Squaring on, through what seemed like acres of putrid rubbish, Holloway finally saw the door with cracked paneling. *That's it!* he exulted, *That's the closet awright!* He sucked in a mouthful of foul air and held his breath, listening for the sound of approaching footsteps. The house was silent—the old crumbs must be upstairs, snoozing among the garbage on the second floor. Carty was right, so far!

Holloway turned the doorknob and eased it open. He slipped into the murky closet, crou until he heard the knob click shut solidly behind him. The tiny cubicle was stifling and musty, and the walls felt clammy under his fingertips, but it was worth it. Twenty-five thousand bucks was stashed away here, Carty

had said. This is where the old misers had buried their lousy dough!

A minute later, his eyes beginning to pick out the faded outline of objects in the closer, Holloway started to probe through the boxes piled in clogged profusion on all sides. Carty had warned him to be careful, Holloway remembered as he searched tagging boxes and folds of wormy cloth. The place might be alive with rats! There was only one box left now—the big one on the floor at his feet. He fought down the revulsion he was beginning to feel, and dug into snags of mouldering fabric. Their nest-egg got to be in *here*, Holloway thought, his heart hammering so hard that he felt the pressure in his ears. He scooped up a handful of sooting cloth and hurled it to one side with a shudder. And then it hit him, like a swarm of bees. Only it was *moths*... thousands of them, all at once. He staggered backwards, his hand groping for the doorknob. He tasted the dry-dustiness of their wings in his mouth, the twitching of the moths' oozy bodies as they fluttered against his eyelids. His fingers circled the knob and wrenched: the door was locked! Holloway shrieked, once. That was all the time he had before the frantic whurring drowned out all sound... the writhing, powdery bodies blocked all vision. He felt his stomach knotting as he tried to gulp air, but it was no use. A generation of moths had hatched undisturbed in the miserable closet—by the thousands, now, they were blocking the passages of his nose, forcing their way into his gaping mouth and down his gagging throat. Then, when he had stopped writhing—when his last scream had strangled in his throat—they went to work on the delusory shreds of clothing which had been Holloway's *nest* just minutes before.



# YOU, TOO, CAN MEET NEW FRIENDS! JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

SEND FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT TODAY RECEIVE A FULL-COLOR 11½ X 10½ ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SHABBY EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN.

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢ FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ALONG WITH 25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER, EACH MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... BY RETURN MAIL!

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 704  
235 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N.Y.

Here's my two bits! I want the things  
and stuff like the kids wearing! I want  
to meet new friends having kid's meeting!  
I'm a fan addict! I'm mad!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE



*Hummmph! Just because they're being sued, I gotta leave part of my column this issue! So now let me turn you over to my two criminal editors, who'll try and worm their way out of this one! Talk fast, boys!*

\* \* \* \* \*

Yep, bless her ice-cube heart, the old gal is right! As of this writing, E.C. is being sued! And of all things, we've been accused of attempting (in the words of the papers served upon us by Gilberton Company, Inc., Albert L. Kanter, President, in seeking a preliminary injunction) to "... intentionally, unitarily and unlawfully adopt, copy and imitate the title and style and format of the art work of plaintiff's said periodical, 'Classics Illustrated'..."

The magazine that the Gilberton Company claims is an imitation of "Classics Illustrated" is none other than our own "Three Dimensional E.C. Classics." Mr. Kanter's attorneys go on to allege that "... in so using the word 'classics' and in adopting the same style, size and format for defendants' first issue of their magazine, defendants (E.C.) ... adopted said title, size and format in bad faith and with an intent and tendency (a) to deceive and mislead the trade and public in general; (b) to pass off their magazine as the work and property of the plaintiff; (c) to appropriate for themselves the plaintiff's title, reputation, trade name and good will; and (d) to convey to the members of the trade and of the reading public the misleading impression that defendants' (E.C.'s) said magazine was in fact one of the numbers of the plaintiff's (Gilberton's) prior established periodical, 'Classics Illustrated'..."

In Mr. Kanter's own words from his sworn affidavit: "... the attempt to pass off defendants' magazine as plaintiff's periodical is self-evident."

William M. Games, in his seventeen page answering affidavit (of which only a small portion can be reproduced here due to space limitations) stated: "... Before meeting and disposing of the plaintiff's untoward and unfounded criticisms, I herewith emphatically and categorically deny that the title of our book, 'Three Dimensional E.C. Classics,' its cover or any of its art work was intentionally chosen, conceived of or created so as to simu-

late the appearance of the plaintiff's 'Classics Illustrated.' Until the plaintiff registered its complaint with me.... it never occurred to me that there was any peril of our 'comic' book in question being mistaken for the plaintiff's. The receipt of that complaint momentarily concerned me, not because of a fear of unwitting wrongdoing on my part, but rather because the last thing I could possibly desire—and I'm not being sarcastic—would be for anyone to identify our book as one of the plaintiff's.

"... Manifestly, the defendants (E.C.) have neither the intention nor the desire to have their books confused with the plaintiff's.

"... The plaintiff has confessed that its books are 'acceptable,' widely testifying that the defendants are not. It is perhaps true that the readers of the plaintiff's (Gilberton's) books do not purchase the defendants' (E.C.'s) products. It is equally true that 'Classics Illustrated' is not 'acceptable' to our readers.

"... I respectfully pray that their motion for a preliminary injunction be denied."

\* \* \* \* \*

It was!—ed.

\* \* \* \* \*

O.K. you old bag... take it away! You may have the last two inches!

Hee, hee! You may be brushing out of the other sides of your mouths, come the trail! And my two inches just leaves me enough room for the commercials: E.C.'s 3-D mags, the nefarious and infamous **THREE DIMENSIONAL E.C. CLASSICS**, as well as the more innocuous **THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR** are still available by mail order... 15¢ each, 2 for 35¢! A subscription to this mag will set you back one buck for eight issues. The address for 3-D orders, sub orders, fan-mail, and legal advice is:

The Old Witch  
Room 705, Dept. Lowmalt  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.



**YOU'LL BE HORRIFIED ALONG WITH  
THEODORE WHEN HE DISCOVERS**

# The SECRET



THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT ME AGAIN... MISS HEATHER AND MISS GRAVES... THE ORPHAN ASYLUM MATRONS. AT NIGHT WHEN THE OTHER KIDS ARE ASLEEP, I BREAK DOWN AND LISTEN. I'M SCARED COMING THROUGH THE DARK HALLWAY AND DOWN THE STAIRS. SOME OF THE STEPS CREAK. I KNOW WHERE TO WALK SO THEY DON'T, ONLY SOMETIMES I FORGET TO STEP IN THE RIGHT PLACE AND THE CREAK SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE SCREAMING. SOME NIGHTS IT'S WINDY AND THE SHUTTERS BANG AND I WANT TO SCREAM TOO, ONLY I HOLD IT IN, BECAUSE I WANT TO KNOW. I WANT TO KNOW WHY NOBODY'S EVER ADOPTED ME AND TAKEN ME HOME WITH THEM. I WANT TO KNOW THE SECRET.

HE'S ALMOST **FOURTEEN**, MISS GRAVES!  
YOU KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS GETTING  
THEM ADOPTED ONCE THEY REACH THEIR  
**TEENS!**

AND THAT... THAT MEANS HE'LL BE WITH  
US UNTIL HE TURNS **EIGHTEEN!** OH...  
WHAT WILL WE DO, MISS HEATHER?



I USED TO THINK IT WAS BECAUSE THEY **LOVED** ME  
THAT THEY KEPT ME HERE AT THE ORPHANAGE. I USED  
TO THINK THEY **WANTED** ME FOR THEIR **VERY OWN**...

HE'S REACHING **MAJORITY**, MISS  
GRAVES! YOU'VE GOT TO GET HIM  
OFF OUR HANDS! DON'T YOU  
**SEE?**

I **UNDER-  
STAND**, MISS  
HEATHER. I'LL  
START DOING EVERY-  
THING I CAN TO  
**ENCOURAGE** HIS  
ADOPTION.



BUT WHEN THEY STARTED TREATING ME BAD... WHEN  
THEY STARTED LOCKING ME IN THE ROOM... WHEN THEY  
STARTED WHISPERING ABOUT ME, I **KNEW** THERE WAS A  
SECRET...

AND YOU'LL **FORGET**  
ABOUT THE... THE...

IT WILL BE OUR **SECRET**,  
MISS HEATHER!



IT ALWAYS KEEPS ME AWAKE AFTER I HEAR THEM TALKING. I GO BACK TO THE DORM AND I LIE ON MY BED AND I THINK HARD ABOUT WHAT THEY SAID AND TRY TO MAKE THE SECRET COME OUT OF IT. BUT I CAN'T SO I PRETEND I KNOW WHAT IT IS...

I'VE GOT A REAL MOM AND DAD SOMEWHERE! THAT'S IT! AND SOME DAY THEY MIGHT COME FOR ME AND TAKE ME TO A REAL HOME...



BUT NOW MISS HEATHER AND MISS GRAVES AREN'T GOING TO TELL ANYBODY. THEY WANT TO PUT ME UP FOR ADOPTION AND KEEP IT A SECRET. AND ALL BECAUSE I SET BACK ONCE IN A WHILE, AND THEY HAVE TO LOCK ME IN THE ROOM...

MAYBE... MAYBE IF I PROMISE NEVER TO RUN AWAY AGAIN! MAYBE IF I PROMISE TO BE GOOD... AND WORK AROUND THE HOME... AND FIX THINGS WHEN THEY BREAK... MAYBE THEY'LL LET ME STAY UNTIL MY REAL MOM AND DAD COME!



I DON'T MIND LIVING IN THE ORPHAN ASYLUM. MISS GRAVES AND MISS HEATHER ARE OKAY EXCEPT WHEN THEY GET MAD. THEY GET MAD AT ME WHEN I START COMPLAINING. BUT SEE... I'M BIGGER THAN MOST OF THE OTHER KIDS. I NEED MORE...



THEY ALWAYS LOCK ME IN THE ROOM WHEN I COMPLAIN. IT'S A LITTLE ROOM WITH NOTHING BUT A BED, AND IT'S LONGER IN THE ROOM.

PLEASE, MISS HEATHER! DON'T LOCK ME IN! I'LL BE GOOD! I CAN'T HELP IT! I'M HUNGRY! PLEASE... SHUT UP, THEODORE! YOU'RE DISTURBING THE OTHER CHILDREN!



AFTER A WHILE, I CAN'T STAND IT IN THE LITTLE ROOM ANYMORE. SO I CLIMB OUT OF THE WINDOW AND BACK DOWN THE BRICKS!



AND I RUN AWAY...

THERE HE GOES AGAIN! OH, IF HE'D ONLY LEAVE FOR GOOD!

HE'LL BE BACK, MISS GRAVES. THE ONLY SOLUTION IS ADOPTION.



WHEN I COME BACK, MISS HEATHER IS ALWAYS WAITING FOR ME. SHE DOESN'T GET MAD. SHE JUST TAKES ME BACK UP TO THE LITTLE ROOM AND MAKES ME GO TO BED AGAIN. SHE EVEN LETS ME SLEEP LATE. BUT NOT THIS MORNING...

RUN! SO WASH UP AND COMB YOUR HAIR AND DRESS NEATLY, THEN COME DOWNSTAIRS TO MY OFFICE.



I'M SCARED ABOUT GOING DOWN TO THE OFFICE. MISS HEATHER ALWAYS TELLS AT ME WHEN SHE SENDS FOR ME TO COME TO HER OFFICE. BUT THIS TIME, SHE **SMILES** AT ME!



MISS HEATHER GETS ANGRY AT ME SOMETIMES, BUT NEVER LIKE THIS. HER FACE GETS ALL RED AND HER EYES BULGE, AND SHE GRABS MY ARM TIGHT AND SHE SHAKES ME—

YOU LITTLE BRAT! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO RUN THIS CHANGE BUT, MY FOR ME TO GET RID OF YOU! REAL YOU'RE GOING WITH THEM. PARENTS.



I KNOW MISS HEATHER WON'T TELL AT ME OR PUNISH ME FOR LISTENING OUTSIDE HER OFFICE NOW, SO I'M NOT SCARED TO ASK...

...THEN, WHAT IS THE SECRET ABOUT ME? SECRET? WHAT SECRET? I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, THEODORE!



WE'RE NOT YOUR REAL PARENTS, SON! BUT WE'D BE JUST LIKE REAL PARENTS! WE WANT TO ADOPT YOU!



NO! NO! I WANT MY REAL PARENTS! I DON'T WANT TO GO WITH YOU!

YOU HAVE NO REAL PARENTS! AND IF I TOLD MR. AND MRS. COLBERT EVERYTHING, THEY WOULDN'T HAVE YOU ON A SILVER PLATTER!



I'M NOT, SON. SO—SAY, MISS, HEATHER!

I WANT TO STAY HERE! I WANT TO STAY WITH MISS HEATHER! I...



PLEASE! LEAVE ME ALONE WITH HIM FOR A FEW MOMENTS. OF COURSE!

DON'T YOU WANT TO BE LIKE OTHER BOYS, THEODORE? HAVE A HOME... AND FRIENDS... PLENTY TO EAT? THE COLBERTS SEEM LIKE SUCH NICE PEOPLE!



ALL RIGHT! I'LL GO WITH THEM, MISS HEATHER. IF YOU WANT ME TO! BUT... WELL, IF I HAD NO REAL PARENTS...

I FEEL ALL COLD AND SHAKY LEAVING THE HOME. I FEEL BAD THE WAY MISS HEATHER MAKES A FACE WHEN I KISS HER GOODNITE, LIKE IT MAKES HER SICK FOR ME TO KISS HER.



BE A... GOOD... GOODNITE, SON. MISS HEATHER, SAYING SON.

THE COLBERTS KEEP TALKING ABOUT NICE THINGS ON THE WAY TO MY NEW HOME, BUT I JUST THINK ABOUT THE SECRET... AND HOW MAYBE NOW I'LL NEVER FIND OUT WHAT IT WAS.

THEODORE! CAN HEAR FROM DOES THAT SOUND TO YOU, SON? HA! OH, COME! IT'LL BE WONDERFUL HAVING HIM!



IT'S A LONG TRIP TO WHERE MY NEW PARENTS LIVE AND I DON'T FEEL GOOD ABOUT MY NEW HOME. IT LOOKS SO LONESOME, AND I DON'T HEAR ANY KIDS LAUGHING AND PLAYING LIKE BACK AT THE ORPHANAGE...



MRS. COLBERT, DA, NOW, JUSSES ABOUT IN THE KITCHEN AND MAKES ME A BIG SUPPER. I TRY TO EAT SO SHE WON'T BE ANGRY WITH ME...



THEY MAKE ME EAT. THEY STAND OVER ME UNTIL I FINISH EVERY LAST DROP. I FEEL ALL RICK INSIDE...



AFTER SUPPER THEY TAKE ME UPSTAIRS TO MY ROOM...



OUTSIDE, IT'S DARK AND QUIET! THERE ARE NO HOUSES FOR MILES. NOTHING BUT WOODS. I'M SCARED AND LONESOME. I WANT TO BE WITH SOMEONE, EVEN THE COLBERTS.



THEY'VE LOOKED ME UP! THEY'VE LOOKED ME UP MY ROOM JUST LIKE MISS HEATHER USED TO DO WHEN SHE WAS ANGRY WITH ME...



I WANT TO RUN AWAY! BUT THE WINDOWS...



THEY **KEEP** ME LOCKED UP IN MY ROOM... EVERY FEW HOURS, MRS. COLBERT COMES IN WITH A TRAY OF FOOD...



**EAT IT, THEODORE! EAT IT ALL UP!**

WHY DO YOU KEEP ME LOCKED UP, MA'AM? WHY WON'T YOU LET ME GO OUT AND PLAY?

IT'S A **SECRET**, THEODORE! BUT FIRST, WE HAVE TO **BUILD** YOU UP... GET YOU **NICE AND STRONG AND HEALTHY!**

AND THEN YOU'LL TELL ME?



THEN YOU'LL FIND OUT, THEODORE! NOW, EAT! **FINISH EVERY DROP!**

YEE MA'AM!



I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D GET ADD UP SO BAD. BACK AT THE ORPHAN ANYLIM, I USED TO GET **ADD UP** ALL THE TIME. BUT NOW, I GET **MORE** THAN ENOUGH...

**FOUR FRIED EGGS!** I COULD NEVER EAT THAT MUCH!

OF COURSE YOU CAN, THEODORE! AND DRINK YOUR **MILK!** IT'LL MAKE YOU **BIG AND STRONG**... GIVE YOU **GOOD RICH BLOOD**...



IF YOU'D JUST LET ME GO OUT AND PLAY... INSTEAD OF KEEPING ME LOCKED IN LIKE THIS, MAYBE I COULD DEVELOP AN **APPETITE!**

WE CAN'T HAVE YOU **RUNNING AROUND LOSING WEIGHT**, THEODORE! YOU WERE **TERribly RUN-DOWN** WHEN WE TOOK YOU FROM THE ORPHANAGE. WHY, YOU'RE JUST **BEGINNING** TO LOOK **HALF-WAY DECENT!**



AND ALL THE TIME THAT I'M LOCKED IN MY ROOM... WHEN MRS. COLBERT ISN'T STUFFING FOOD INTO ME... I THINK ABOUT THE **SECRET**. I WONDER WHAT IT IS...



**RED TIME**, THEODORE! YOU MUST GET **PLENTY** OF **SLEEP**. BUT FIRST, DRINK THIS **ENDO-LATE MILK!** IT HAS TWO **RAN EGGS** IN IT!

YES, MA'AM!

I GUESS THEY'RE JUST TRYING TO BE GOOD TO ME. IT'D BE HAPPY ABOUT IT, TOGETHER THEY DON'T KEEP ME LOCKED UP ALL THE TIME...



THAT'S A **GOOD** **BOY!**

WHAT'S THE **SECRET**, MA'AM? TELL ME, PLEASE!

YOU'LL FIND OUT, THEODORE. **VERY SOON, NOW!**



I KNOW THE SECRET NOW! IT'S BEEN A MONTH SINCE MR. AND MRS. GOLBERT TOOK ME FROM THE ORPHAN ASYLUM AND BROUGHT ME HERE AND LOOKED ME UP IN THIS ROOM... AND NOW I KNOW THE SECRET. I HEAR THEM COMING UP THE STAIRS...



I WAS HOPING YOU'D WANT TO TELL HIM SOMETHING EDWIN! I DON'T THINK I COULD HAVE WAITED ANOTHER DAY!

THE SECRET? THEY'RE COMING TO TELL IT TO ME. BUT I KNOW IT! I KNOW IT ALREADY. I HEAR FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE MY DOOR... A KEY SCRAPING IN THE LOCK...



THEODORE? ARE YOU ASLEEP? WE HAVE SOME THING TO TELL YOU!

I... I KNOW IT, MOM... GASP I KNOW THE SECRET.

YOU'RE JUST RIGHT, NOW, THEODORE! JUST RIGHT! YOU'RE FAT AND FULL OF HIGH RED BLOOD.

BLOOD TO DRINK!

THAT'S OUR SECRET, THEODORE! WE'RE VAMPIRES!



THEY STAND THERE, DROOLING, THEIR FANGES BARED, STARING AT ME, STARING INTO THE SHADOWS WHERE I COWER...



ISN'T THAT A HUGE SECRET, THEODORE? THEODORE? COME OUT, THEODORE!

IT'S NO USE SCREAMING, THEODORE! THERE ISN'T A HOUSE FOR MILES!

ONLY I WAS WRONG! THEIR SECRET... MOM AND DAD GOLBERT'S... THEIR SECRET ISN'T MY SECRET. I TWO FORWARD SEPTLY



EDWIN! CHORE! LOOK!

GOOD LORD!

NOW I KNOW WHY I USED TO GET HUNGRY! WHEN THE MOON WAS FULL AND SHONE LIKE SILVER ON THE ORPHANAGE LAWN AND MOSS PEATHER USED TO LOCK ME IN THE LITTLE ROOM. I SPINNED AT THEM... RIPPING TEARS FLASHING... LIKE I USED TO DO WHEN I'D RUN AWAY...



EEEEEEHARRR GH!

THAT IS THE SECRET. MY SECRET... I KNOW NOW THAT I AM A FLESH-HUNGRY, FEROCIOUS, LOATHSOME WEREWOLF...

HEE, HEE! DELICIOUS LITTLE THIBIT, EAT AND IF YOU DON'T THINK THAT A YOUNG WOLF CAN TAKE CARE OF TWO GROWN-UPS, LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT THESE TWO OLD HANDS! BEYOND THE YOUNG... AH... BUT THAT'S A DIFFERENT STORY. WE'LL SAVE THAT ONE FOR ANOTHER ONE! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO G.E., WHO'S WAITING TO WORD UP MY MUSE BAG WITH A TALE FROM HIS COLLECTION IN THE CRYPT. I'LL BE COOKING UP MORE OF THIS CRISP WHEN...



AS ONE STEER SAID TO THE OTHER AS THEY ENTERED THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE... 'WELL, WE MEAT!'

WYE, NOW... E O JANT OF

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER TO WORD OF THE OLD MAN'S MAD WITH A SLIMY SELECTION FROM MY COLLECTION OF TERROR-TOWNED HERE IN THE CRYPT. SO DREEP IN, Cuddle UP ON THAT OUTSIDE, AND I'LL BRIP YOU WITH THE BRIEF CASE OF HORRORITY I CALL...

## HEAD-ROOM!



LOLA JOHNSON STOOD FISHING THE SMALL FITTED KEYS OF HER PLEASANT HOTEL, AND WATCHED HER LATEST GUEST SCOWL AN ILLUSIBLE SIGNATURE IN THE REGISTER. OUTSIDE, A GHOST WHIST CRIED AROUND THE HOTEL LIKE A STEALTHY GREY CAT, AND THERE WAS NO SOUND LIKE THE SCORCHING OF THE PEN IN HIS LARGE RUARY PAW AND THE REGULAR ANIMAL GRUNT OF HIS HEAVY BREATHING. LOLA SMILED. SHE WAS SUDDENLY AWAKE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, OF THE DARK, FETID REEK OF ROTTED WOOD IN THE ANCIENT LORRY, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING MORE. THERE WAS A SUBTLE, HAUNTING AURA THAT SEEMED TO COME FROM THE MANNERS UP.



LOLA TRIED NOT TO LOOK AT HIM, BUT HER GAZE WAS HELD BY A MORBID FASCINATION. HE WAS ONLY BEYOND DESCRIPTION, A REVOLTING FIGURE OF EVIL, WITH A FACE THAT NO HOLLYWOOD MAKE-UP MAN COULD EVER DREAM UP EVEN IN HIS WORST NIGHTMARES. SHE HANDED HIM THE KEY AND HER VOICE WAS HOLLOW AND SHY...

THAT WILL BE TEN DOLLARS A WEEK...  
IN ADVANCE. SECOND FLOOR REAR.



SHE SHUDDERED AS HE TOOK THE KEY AND DROPPED THE TEN DOLLAR BILL ON THE DESK. THE THOUGHT OF TOUCHING HIS MONEY MADE HER FLESH CREEP. HE TURNED AND STARTED UP THE STAIRS...



DON'T FORGET. YOU MUST BE OUT BY **SIX** EVERY NIGHT.

SHE LISTENED TO HIS DRY, CRISP AGREEMENT AND THE MUFFLED SOUND OF HIS FOOTFALLS FADING AWAY ALONG THE UPSTAIRS HALL.

THAT'S... CHOKY... THE **FIEST, MOST RIDICULOUS FACE** I'VE EVER SEEN. I NEVER SHOULD HAVE LET HIM HAVE THE ROOM. WHAT WILL OTTO SAY WHEN I TELL HIM?



LOLA THOUGHT OF OTTO HEARING SHE THOUGHT OF HOW HE'D COME TO THE HOTEL, A LITTLE LESS THAN A MONTH AGO, AND HOW HE'D ASKED...

I'D LIKE A **ROOM**. I HAVE A **NICE ROOM** ON THE **SECOND FLOOR**. I CAN'T AFFORD TOO MUCH. I HAVE IT FOR... **SEVEN DOLLARS A WEEK**.



LOLA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D **LIKED** OTTO RIGHT OFF. SHE'D ALWAYS GOTTEN **TEN** FOR THAT ROOM... BUT SHE'D **LOOKED** AT HIM AND **WANTED** HIM TO **STAY**, SO SHE'D **REDUCED** THE RENT FOR HIM...

SEVENTH THAT **SOUNDS REASONABLE**. IS IT A **NICE ROOM**?

IT'S A **LOVELY ROOM** COME ALONG. I'LL SHOW IT TO YOU.



LOLA HAD **ALREADY** LEFT HER DESK BEFORE TO SHOW A ROOM, BUT SHE'D FELT **GOOD** ABOUT OTTO, RIGHT AWAY. SHE'D TAKEN HIM UP AND **LINGERED** THERE, EVEN AFTER HE'D AGREED TO TAKE IT AND HAD PAID HER. LOLA HAD NOT UNDERSTOOD HER FEELINGS AT THAT TIME. SHE'D NEVER **WANTED** A MAN **FEELING** OTTO...

I USUALLY CHARGE A **DOLLAR A WEEK** EXTRA FOR **MAID SERVICE**, BUT...

I'LL DO MY **OWN** **CLEANING**, THANK YOU, MISS **FEDERSON**. I DON'T MIND!



SO OTTO HAD COME TO LIVE IN LOLA'S HOTEL, AND AS THE WEEKS WENT BY HER FONDNESS FOR HIM HAD SWELLED TO A HUNGRY YEARNING. HE'D FED HER WITH SMILES AND WARM WORDS, THE TOUCH OF A HAND, BUT **NOTHING MORE**...

GOOD EVENING, OTTO. OR... WHY DON'T YOU COME INTO MY **ROOM**? I'LL FIX SOME **TEA**. WE CAN **TALK**...

ANOTHER TIME, PERHAPS, LOLA. I'M **VERY TIRED**. GOOD-NIGHT!



SHE HAD **TRIED** TO ENCOURAGE HIM WITH SYMPATHETIC ATTENTION, BUT OTTO'S NEEDS, WHATEVER THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN, HAD NOT **INCLUDED** HER COMPANIONSHIP. AND HIS **SEEMING** **RELUCTANCE** TO BE **ALONE** WITH HER HAD ONLY **SERVED** AS **FUEL** FOR LOLA'S BURNING DESIRES.

FOOD OTTO. WAKING UP AT THE CRACK OF DAWN AND RUSHING OUT WITH HIS **SAMPLE CASE** WHEN **MOST** MEN ARE WAITING FOR THEIR WIVES TO SERVE THEIR **BREAKFAST**!

IF I'M NOT **FIRST** ON THE SPOT WITH A **COCKTAIL**, I DON'T MAKE A **SALE**, LOLA!





OTTO HAD BEEN SUCH A FOOL, LOLA'D ALL BUT ASKED HIM TO MARRY HER, BUT IT'D SOME COM-  
PLETELY OVER HIS HEAD...

DON'T YOU SEE, OTTO?  
I OWN THIS HOTEL. I  
COULD MAKE THINGS  
EASY FOR YOU, IF...

I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT  
THAT, LOLA! WOULD YOU  
WOULD YOU CONSIDER  
LETTING ME SHARE MY  
ROOM WITH ANOTHER BEN-  
FLEMMAN? I COULD USE THE  
MONEY TO SAVE SO MYSELF.



LOLA REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D TOLD OTTO SHE'D THINK  
IT OVER ABOUT HIS SHARING A ROOM... BUT SHE HADN'T LIKED  
THE IDEA AT ALL. WITH ANOTHER MAN LIVING IN HER ROOM,  
HE WOULDN'T BE ALONE ANYMORE. HER CHANCES WOULD  
BE EVEN LESS. AND SO, WHEN THE PHONE RANG THIS  
MORNING...

YES, YES, THIS IS THE GOTHAM HOTEL!  
WHAT? RENT A ROOM? NO! WE'RE ALL  
FILLED UP! WHAT? YOU WORK AT NIGHT?  
YOU'D WANT IT DURING THE DAY? NO,  
I'M SORRY...



THE RASPING VOICE AT THE OTHER  
END OF THE PHONE HAD BEEN THE  
ANSWER TO LOLA'S DILEMMA. IF  
SHE WERE TO ALLOW OTTO TO  
SHARE A ROOM WITH SOMEONE WHO  
WORKED AT NIGHT, THERE WOULDN'T  
BE ANYONE AROUND IN THE EVE-  
NINGS TO CRAMP HER STYLE...

WAIT A MINUTE! IF I HAVE YOUR  
ASSURANCE THAT YOU'LL ONLY  
NEED THE ROOM DURING THE DAY,  
THAT YOU'LL LEAVE BY SIX AT  
NIGHT AND NOT COME BACK TILL  
AFTER SIX IN THE MORNING,  
PERHAPS...



SO SHE'D TOLD THE HOARSE,  
BARELY INTELLIGIBLE VOICE TO  
COME OVER... THAT A ROOM WAS  
AVAILABLE ON THAT BASIS, AND  
WHILE SHE'D WAITED FOR HIM,  
SHE'D TURNED ON THE RADIO...

... ANOTHER BODY OF A WOMAN  
WAS FOUND EARLY THIS MORNING.  
THIS IS THE LATEST VICTIM OF  
THE REDICULOUS MANIAC, WHOM  
THE PRESS HAD APPROPRIATELY  
DUBBED "THE RIPPER"...



... BUT LOLA'D BEEN IN A PRIVATE  
LITTLE WORLD OF HER OWN IMAGI-  
NATION, SO SHE'D ONLY HALF-HEARD  
THE HARROWING REPORT...

"THE RIPPER" ATTACKS WOMEN ON  
LOVELY DESERTED STREETS AND  
DISCAPITATES THEM, CARRYING  
AWAY THEIR HEADS! ALL  
CITIZENS ARE WARNED TO...



NOT SHE'D NOT THOUGHT MUCH OF THE RADIO  
REPORT. SHE'D BEEN THINKING OF HOW PLEASANT  
OTTO WOULD BE WITH HER FOR MAKING THESE  
ARRANGEMENTS AND HOW SHE'D BE ABLE TO REDUCE  
HIS RENT EVEN MORE. AND THEN, SHE'D LOOKED UP  
TO SEE THE APE-LIKE FIGURE STANDING THERE,  
SUITCASE IN HAND...

SASSY! YOU STARTLED  
ME! YES? WHAT CAN I DO... I  
DON'T YOU MUST BE THE ONE...



AND SHE'D INSTINCTIVELY ASSOCIATED THE RASPING  
BARELY INTELLIGIBLE VOICE ON THE PHONE WITH THE  
HIDEOUS CREATURE BEFORE HER. BUT SHE'D BEEN TOO  
FRIGHTENED TO REFUSE HIM THE ROOM. SO SHE'D HANDED  
HIM THE PEN NERVOUSLY AND TAKEN HIS MONEY AND  
DIRECTED HIM TO THE SECOND FLOOR NEAR... TO OTTO'S  
ROOM...

DON'T FORGET! YOU MUST BE  
OUT BY SIX EVERY NIGHT!



LOLA WAS SHOCKED OUT OF HER REVERIE BY FOOTSTEPS ON THE OLD CREAKY HOTEL STAIRS. SHE LOOKED UP. HE WAS COMING DOWN AGAIN...

MAYBE... MAYBE HE DOESN'T LIKE THE ROOM? MAYBE...



HE SHUFFLED SILENTLY ACROSS THE LOBBY AND OUT THE DOOR, SUITCASE IN HAND...

MAYBE HE WON'T COME BACK? NO? HE HE PAID A WEEK IN ADVANCE! HE'LL BE BACK... SO...



LOLA WAITED PATIENTLY FOR OTTO'S RETURN THAT EVENING. WHEN HE FINALLY CAME IN, SHE RUSHED TO HIM WHISPERING...

OH, OTTO! I DID SUCH A TERRIBLE THING! I RENTED YOUR ROOM TO SOMEONE ELSE FOR DURING THE DAY.

WHY, THAT'S WONDERFUL, LOLA! THAT'S BETTER THAN SHARING THE ROOM.



BUT HE'S HORRIBLE! JUST HORRIBLE! HE'S THE UGLIEST CREATURE I'VE EVER SEEN! HE HE LOOKS LIKE... LIKE A MURDERER!

OH, COME, NOW, LOLA! LET'S NOT LET OUR IMAGINATION RUN AWAY WITH US. BESIDES...



HE'D LOOKED AT HER WARMLY, ALMOST SUGGESTIVELY.

THIS IS A MUCH HAPPIER ARRANGEMENT THAN SHARING A ROOM, LOLA. THIS WAY I STILL HAVE MY PRIVACY IN THE EVENINGS! SO WE DON'T CARE WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE... DO WE?

HERE! LET ME CARRY YOUR SAMPLE CASE UP FOR YOU, OTTO! YOU MUST BE TIRED! I CAN BRING YOU A CUP OF HOT TEA IF YOU LIKE. I...



HE MOVED UP THE STAIRS, RESUFFLING HER, ACCORDING TO THE BITTERNESS OF HER PASSION...

NO, THANK YOU! I CAN CARRY IT MYSELF! I WANT NOTHING! NOTHING BUT REST... AND PRIVACY! GOOD-NIGHT, LOLA!

BUT... I... GOOD-NIGHT, OTTO!



THAT NIGHT LOLA TOSSED AND TURNED, UNABLE TO SLEEP. SHE KEPT SEEING THAT HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE FACE, AND THEN SHE'D DRIVE THE SICKENING VISION FROM HER MIND BY THINKING ABOUT OTTO, AND NOW! SHE WANTED HIM AND NOW IT WOULD BE IN HIS ARMS...

OH, OTTO! OTTO! I'VE THROWN MYSELF AT YOU! I MUST HAVE YOU! I NEED YOU... SO...



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, A GROWING UNEASINESS PLAGUED LOLA. THE GLIMPSES SHE CAUGHT OF HER HIDEOUS GUEST LEAVING EACH NIGHT FOR WORK PLAYED UPON HER MIND. SHE IMAGINED MEETING HIM ON THE BACK STAIRCASE, HIS SPOTSCARF FACE LEERING AT HER, HIS GREAT WARPED BODY COMING CLOSER... CLOSER... HIS HOT BREATH UPON HER THROAT... HIS HAIRY FISTS REACHING...

SHE WOULD TRY TO ERASE HIM FROM HER MIND BY THINKING ABOUT OTTO, BUT IT WOULDN'T WORK ANY MORE. AND THERE WERE THOSE NEWS-PAPER HEADLINES... THE RADIO BULLETINS...

"THE RIPPER'S SIXTH VICTIM WAS DISCOVERED TODAY IN AN ABANDONED...

"HE'S THE RIPPER! I KNOW IT! I KNOW IT!"



AGAIN AND AGAIN SHE RUSHED TO THE PHONE TO CALL THE POLICE, TO TELL THEM THAT THE MURDERER WAS UNDER HER DOOR...



"NO! THEY WON'T BELIEVE ME. I'D BE JUST ANOTHER 'CRAM' CALLING! I'VE GOT TO HAVE PROOF..."

SO LOLA DECIDED TO GET THE PROOF... TO FIND IT IN THE ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR. THAT EVENING, SHE WAITED FOR HER HIDEOUS GUEST TO LEAVE.



THEN SHE LEFT HER DESK, TAKING THE PASSKEY. SHE TREMBLED AT EVERY STEP SHE TOOK UP THE WHIRLING STAIRS...



THE LONG WALK DOWN THE SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR ONLY INCREASED THE AGONYING FAINTNESS IN HER STOMACH. SHE HAD AN URGENT NEED TO GO DOWN TO HER ROOM. BUT SHE WENT ON, FINALLY REACHING THE DOOR. SHE INSERTED THE PASSKEY IN THE LOCK, TURNED IT... THE GRATING SOUND TENSING EVERY NERVE IN HER TORTURED BODY.



THE DOOR SAUNG OPEN. SHE STEPPED INSIDE, A CHILL SWEEPING OVER HER. THE ROOM WAS HEAVY WITH THE SWEET OF PERSPIRATION. SHE MOVED TO THE TWO CLOSETS... TRYING OPEN THE ONE ON THE RIGHT...



"CLOTHES? NOTHING BUT CLOTHES? OTTO'S CLOTHES..."

SHE TURNED TO THE OTHER CLOSET... SHE TRIED THE KNOB...



SHE FITTED THE PASSKEY TO THE CLOSET DOOR... UNLOCKING IT. SHE FLUNG IT OPEN. A POWERFUL STENCH BURNED HER NOSTRILS...



IT WAS THE SMELL OF THAT MAN. THE SMELL OF DEATH. SHE PEEPED IN. THE FRONT WAS THERE...



THE HEADS... SIX STARRING HEADS GRINNED AT HER... HANGING SPOTSCQUELY FROM THE CLOTHES HOOKS INSIDE THE CLOSET, LOLA SCREAMED



SHE REMEMBERED SLAMMING THE CLOSET DOOR, THEN EVERYTHING WENT BLACK. WHEN SHE CAME TO, HE WAS BENDING OVER HER...



OTTO... SASP.

WHAT IS IT, LOLA? WHAT HAPPENED? I FOUND YOU ON THE FLOOR. YOU MUST HAVE FAINTED.

SHE THREW HER ARMS AROUND HIM, SCREAMING HISTERICALLY.

HE'S THE ONE, OTTO! THAT HIDEOUS CREATURE... HE'S "THE RUPPER"!



THERE WAS COMFORT AND REASSURANCE IN OTTO'S VOICE AND IN THE FEEL OF HIS BODY AGAINST HER'S. HE LOOKED CONCERNED, AND LOLA FELT SAFE IN HIS STRONG ARMS...

THE ONE I SHARE THE ROOM WITH? DON'T BE DUMB, LOLA. YOU'VE BEEN HEADING TOO MUCH!

I SAID, OTTO! IN THE CLOSET! I SAW THE HEADS!



HE SMILED DOWN AT HER COLELY...

IT WAS A BAD NIGHT FOR BUSINESS, LOLA. NOT A CUSTOMER. HOW LUCKY FOR ME I CAME BACK EARLY...

LUCKY FOR ME, OTTO! OH, HOLD ME



SHE CLOSED HER EYES, TURNING HER LIPS UPWARD TOWARD HIS, INVITING...

YOU'RE SO STRONG, OTTO! I NEED SOMEONE STRONG!

WHY DID YOU DO IT, LOLA?



SHE SHIVERED, WAITING... HE DID NOT KISS HER. SHE OPENED HER EYES. HIS FACE... HIS FACE WAS CHANGING...

OTTO!

WHY DID YOU COME UP HERE, LOLA? WHY?



HE HELD HER IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP. HIS FEATURES GREW UGLY, VILE, EVIL... HE DREW FORTH THE KNIFE...

OTTO! MY GOD!

I DON'T WANT IT TO BE THIS WAY, LOLA! YOU WERE GOOD TO ME! I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO KILL YOU!



THE SCALPEL-EDGE OF THE BUTCHER KNIFE WAS HOT ON LOLA'S NECK. SHE TRIED TO SCREAM BUT NO SOUND CAME OUT... ONLY A CHOKING GURGLE...

WHY DID YOU HAVE TO SPIEL IT, LOLA? WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LOOK IN THE CLOSET?



THERE WAS A PLUM-RED HAZE, AND THROUGH IT LOLA SAW THAT TWO MEN WERE ONE AND THE SAME... THEN THE BLACKNESS...

WHY DID YOU HAVE TO FIND MY HEADS, LOLA?



BUT LOLA COULD NO LONGER HEAR THE ANIMAL GRUNT OF HIS BREATHING. SHE COULD NOT SMELL THE SICKLY ODOR OF DEATH...

HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO POOR LOLA, KIDDIES. SHE LOST HER HEAD OVER IDIOT OTTO. AND YOU'LL LOSE YOUR HEAD OVER THE STUFF YOU GET IN YOUR E.G. FAN-ADDICT CLUB MEMBERSHIP KIT!

TO JOIN NOW? JOIN THE CLUB THAT'S SWEEP-ING THE COUNTRY! JOIN THE STREET-CLEANER'S CHAPTER OF THE E.G. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAN, TALES FROM THE GRIFF! TELL THEM, 'BRET' E.G., THAT IS!



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## EVERYBODY Wears Shoes!

Here's the perfect business, because **EVERYONE** you know can be a customer! Just show friends, relatives, neighbors, people where you work, even Mason Velvet-oxe Air Comfort shoes let them "Walk on Air" That's **REAL** comfort!

As the Mason Shoe Converter you give people the **EXACT** style, size and width they order because you draw on our giant stock of 500,000 pairs in men's 7 1/2 to 13, widths AAAA to EEEE. Customers choose from over 150 different styles—dress, sport and work styles for men and women, including air-cushioned Nylon Mesh shoes, the work shoes with special built-in comfort and safety features. You'll be **EXCITED** the way people will gladly cash profits in your pocket for extra-comfortable Mason shoes!

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**MASON SHOE MFG. CO., Dept. MA-217**  
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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

## Prizes!

**YOU CAN  
MAKE MONEY  
TOO!**

[illegible][illegible]**FREE**[illegible]

**Figure 1**

[illegible]

Have I ever failed to perform and nothing has happened?  
No, it's the President today!

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FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF



NO. 25



REPRINT  
EDITION

# FEAR



FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



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# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! FOND FELICITATIONS, PLEASE! COME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR... THE REVOLTING RESTAURANT OF ~~RECKING REBELLIONS~~, SQUAT DOWN AT THE FEROUS-FABLE THERE, AND GET READY FOR SOME BONY BONE-JUMPS OF BRISKOME BARRING. YEP, IT'S YOUR ENEMY-CHIEF, THE OLD WIFE, STIRRING UP HER GRISLY CAULDRON, READY TO METE OUT HER MORBID MEATS. TODAY'S TREATS INCLUDE: MOLDY MILK WHIPPED MORTAR, PUTRID PABLOWS, FOUL FRYING AND CHOPPED GOD-LYERS, ALL BARY FOODS! PERFECT CHILDISH SNOW- JUNKS SLOPPED JUST YOUR GREEDY BONES TO WHET YOUR APPETITE FOR THE MAIN COURSE... A ~~DEBUTATION~~ DICH CALLED...

## THE NEW ARRIVAL



TAKE A GOOD LONG LOOK AT ME... NOT VERY PRETTY, EYE? I'M JUST AN OLD, DILAPIDATED, WEATHER-BEATEN, PAINT-STAINED, DANCE-FOODS MAMMOM JACQUETTE KNOWN BETTER DAYS... THE DAYS WHEN I WAS BRIGHT AND NEW AND PROUD, WITH CRYSTAL WINDOWS, DRESSED UP IN FRESH CLEAN COATS OF PAINT, STANDING STATELY UPON A LUSH GREEN LAWN. BUT THOSE DAYS ARE GONE... GONE AND ALMOST FORGOTTEN. NOW, PEOPLE SHAN ME... HARRY PART ME IN DREAD... AS IF I WERE A HAUNTED HOUSE...



GOT TO FIND A PLACE TO SPEND THE NIGHT. I WONDER IF THERE ARE ANY HOUSES IN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN TERRITORY.

A person is seen from the side, looking out of a window. The window is divided into several panes, and the view outside is a snowy, hazy landscape. The person is wearing a dark jacket and a hat. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting it might be early morning or late afternoon.

WHAT LOSS? HE SAYS! THE POOR POOL? BAD LUCK? NOW HE'S BLOSSOMING TOWARD ME. I'VE GOT TO DISCOURAGE HIM... GOT TO DRIVE HIM AWAY... FOR HIS OWN SAKE. I'LL BANG MY SHUTTERS CLOSED, HIDING THE DIM LIGHT FROM THE GARDENS, CONCEALING THE FACT THAT SOMEONE LIVES HERE. PERHAPS HE'LL BE FRIGHTENED THEN AT MY BROODING SMYTH UNFRIENDLY APPEARANCE AND GO AWAY...



HMMH SURE IS AN EERIE  
LOOKING PLACE. I'D HATE  
TO SPEND A NIGHT IN  
IT THERE...

HIS HESITATION, THUNDERING AT MY BRIM FORT-  
BODING AIR. I'M WORRIED? I'M... OH, THE IDIOT!  
HE'S THINKING LOGICALLY... PLACING PRACTI-  
CALLY ABOVE FEAR AND DREAD.



OH, WELL! IT'S THE ONLY HOUSE FOR MILES,  
AND ANY PORT IN A STORM? I CAN'T JUST  
STAND HERE ALL NIGHT WAITING BOARDS  
TO THE BRIM... MAYBE CATCH MY DEATH OF  
COLD? NO... HERE GOES...

HERE HE COMES AGAIN. WHAT CAN I  
DO TO STOP HIM? IF I COULD ONLY  
SCREAM A WARNING, IF I COULD  
ONLY SHOUT, "STOP! DON'T COME  
HERE! NOT TONIGHT!" SO AWAY?  
DON'T ENTER MY DOOR OR YOU'RE  
LOST!" BUT ALAS, I CANNOT  
SCREAM. WHIFF I CAN BANG MY  
SHUTTERS...



WHAT'S THAT? OH... JUST THE  
SHUTTERS CLATTERING OPEN  
AND SHUT. BAY? THERE'S A  
LIGHT IN THERE!

IT DOESN'T FRIGHTEN HIM! WHAT  
ELSE CAN I DO? NOTHING BUT LET  
THE WIND WHISTLE AND BISH  
BOOMFLY THROUGH MY CHIMES  
AND CREVICES...



HUNT AN,  
C'MON, LOCKWOOD!  
IT'S JUST THE  
WIND... HOWLING  
PAST THE EARS...

BUT STILL HE COMES. WHAT ELIST  
THE BATS? OF COURSE! PEOPLE  
ARE FRIGHTENED OF BATS. EASY  
TO BATTLE MY RAFTERS AND CHAIN  
A FLOOR FROM MY ATTIC...



WHAT THE...? OH...  
JUST A BUNCH OF  
BATS? I MUST HAVE  
FRIGHTENED THEM.  
THEY WOULDN'T BOTHER  
ME...

HE'S YOUNG AND STUBBORN. NOTHING SCARES HIM OFF.  
HE'S INSISTANT UPON WALKING INTO THE HORROR THAT  
LURES WITHIN MY MOUNDING WALLS. HE'S ALMOST TO  
THE PORCH NOW, AT THE RISK OF HARTING HIM, I'LL  
SHAKE PART OF MY NOTHING EARS DOWN UPON HIM.



HEY?

HE JUMPS AHEAD MINGLY. HE KEEPS COMING. ONE LAST  
CHANCE. THE LOOSE BOARD IN MY PORCH STEPS THERE.



Booey!

OH, NOW STUBBORN CAN HE GET HE JUST PICKS HIMSELF UP AND CALLS HIMSELF "ELEMENT"? IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE ME SLOW MY ROOST! HE'S DEFIED ALL MY ATTEMPTS TO SEND HIM FLEEING. NOW, HE'S AT MY FRONT DOOR... **KNOWING**... NOT **KNOWING** HE'S BARRING ENTRY INTO A **HIDEOUS TRAP**...



MY DOOR CREAKS OPEN ON HIMSELF THAT HAVE NOT TASTED OIL FOR LONG, LONG YEARS. HE'S SHOCKED AT THE FACE THAT APPEARS IN THE DOORWAY. ONE OF THOSE FLESH-OLD FACES, WRINKLED AS IF WITH GREAT AGE, YET STAMPED WITH A KIND OF YOUTHFULNESS...



I... I'M SORRY TO DISTURB YOU AT THIS HOUR... BUT, YOU SEE, MY CAR WON'T START IN THE MUD, AND I...  
OH, YOU POOR MAN? COME ON OUT OF THE RAIN?

SEE HOW EARLYLY THE WELCOMES HIM. HE'S TAKING IT AS A SIGN OF HOSPITALITY? OH, WHAT AN IDIOT! WELL, HE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH...



MY NAME IS EDWINA ADKINS. I'M A WIDOW! TAKE OFF YOUR WET THINGS AND WARM YOURSELF BY THE FIRE!  
LOOKWOOD? MY NAME IS EDGAR LOOKWOOD? I'M A SALESMAN. THANKS...

SUDDENLY THE HOWLING SOUNDS START... THE CRYING... COMING FROM UP THE OLD WINDING STAIRS... COMING FROM THE NURSERY...



A-WAH--A-WAH--A-WAH--! OH, PLEASE EXCUSE YOUR BABY? MY MY BABY IS CRYING!

WATCH HER CLIMB THE STAIRS, LOOKWOOD. HER BABY? USE YOUR HEAD! FOCUS ABOUT THAT FOR A MINUTE. THAT'S IT! THAT'S IT...



HER BABY? SHE'S A MOTHER? OH, SHE PROBABLY ADOPTED ONE. NO, SHE COULDN'T HAVE. SHE'S A WIDOW, SHE SAID. I SUSPECT SHE'S YOUNGER THAN SHE LOOKS. PERHAPS THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND WITH THE BABY ON THE WAY AGED HER LIKE THAT!

WHAT A FITFUL, POOL! WHY ARE ALL HUMAN BEINGS SO LOGICAL WHEN THEY WANT TO BE? WHY DIDN'T HE TAKE MY WARNING? HE DOESN'T EVEN SUSPECT, AS MRS. ADKINS RETURNS...



THE BABY'S STILL CRYING? IT SOUNDS AS THOUGH IT'S IN PAIN!  
HE IS, MR. LOOKWOOD? MY BABY IS RATHER ILL, BUT EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT?

POOR THING? CAN'T YOU PHONE FOR THE DOCTOR?  
THERE'S NO PHONE HERE, MR. LOOKWOOD. NOW, DON'T YOU TROUBLE YOURSELF. I'VE DOCTORED MY LITTLE DOUGLASS THROUGH MANY A CRISIS!



BUT THE ANGUISHED HOWLS OF THE BABY *DISBURD* YOU, DON'T THEY, LOCKWOOD? YOU FEEL *SORRY* FOR THE LITTLE TYKE... MAKE ONE MORE GALLANT OFFER...



CAN I GO *PETCH* THE DOCTOR, MRS. ACORNOFF? MY *SAP* IS STUCK BUT I COULD MAKE IT ON *FOOT*? I MEAN, IF YOUR BABY'S LIFE IS IN DANGER...

YES, LOCKWOOD! *POF* MUSH FOR A DOCTOR! LEAVE *FANT* EXCUSE! JUST DON'T COME BACK, GO *ANEAD*! I DON'T *LISTEN* TO HER...



YOU'RE SWEET TO OFFER, MR. LOCKWOOD, BUT IT'S *NOTHING*, REALLY! MY BABY ISN'T *THAT* SICK!

BUT THAT *PITIFUL* *MAHINA*! SO *LOOOO*...

HE'S JUST *MOODY*! IT'S TIME FOR HIS *BOFFLE*, THIS WILL *QUIET* HIM...

MAY I *HELP*? MAY I *SEE* YOUR BABY, MRS.?



NO? YOU CAN'T SEE HIM? UN... THAT IS... YOU *MIGHT* CATCH HIS *GERMS*, NO-LISE *HEATING* YOUR *HEALTH*, MR. LOCKWOOD! YOU JUST *STAY* DOWN HERE TILL I TAKE CARE OF DUMPLIN'! I WON'T BE LONG!



ALL RIGHT, MRS. ACORNOFF

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S *SOOO*, MR. LOCKWOOD? DON'T YOU *SEE*, NOW? DON'T YOU *SENSE* WHY EVERY MOMENT YOU *STAY* HERE IS WASTING YOU CLOSER AND CLOSER TO A *NIGHT-MARISH* FATE? DON'T YOU *SEEP* OF COURSE NOT, YOU FOOL? INSTEAD, YOU LISTEN TO THE *AGE-OLD* HEART - WARNING SOUNDS DRIFTING DOWN TO YOU FROM THE MURDERY DOOR... THE SOUNDS OF THE LOVING MOTHER AND HER CHILD... AND YOU *SMILE*...



MOTHER'S 'LITTLE DUMPLIN' DARLIN' IS HUNGRY... ISEN'T HE? NAUGHTY NOT NAUGHTY PARENT? MY POOR BABY! HERE'S SOME *NICE* WARM MILK...

CAN'T YOU HEAR MY BEARS GROWLING IN DIBWAY, MR. LOCKWOOD? LOOK AROUND YOU! LOOK AROUND FOR A CLUE TO HER *SINISTER* SECRET...



OH, WELL? MOTHERS ARE *SOOBER* ABOUT THEIR KIDS... *OVERLY* *PROTECTIVE*... *RAVELDING*, SHE PROBABLY *FOUNDED* I'M THE ONE WITH THE *GERMS*? THE... WHAT'S *THIS*?

AH, *THAT'S* IT! THE *FRAMED* PICTURE ON THE DIST-COVERED PIANO! PICK IT UP, LOCKWOOD! PICK IT UP AND READ THE *INSCRIPTION*. *STUDY* IT!



"TO MY DARLING CYNTHIA 'JIT"

SEE THE **UNIFORM** ON THE MAN, MR. LOCKWOOD? RECOGNIZE IT?



HMMM? WAY BACK FROM **WORLD WAR ONE**... A **MEMENTO** SENT BY HER **FATHER**!

**NO, YOU LIED! NOT HER FATHER!** GUSS! AGAIN! THIS IS A CLUE THAT CAN SAVE YOU. MAKE THE RIGHT GUSS! AND YOU'LL RUN AND RUN AS IF DEMONS WERE AT YOUR HEELS. HURRY! SHE'S COMING...



OH! YOU'VE FOUND HIS **PICTURE**? HE WAS **KILLED** COMING OVER THE TOP IN **1918**!

I'M **SO** SORRY! YOU MUST HAVE BEEN JUST A **CHILD** WHEN YOUR FATHER DIED...

**SHE** WON'T DENY IT'S HER FATHER, MR. LOCKWOOD! SHE WOULDN'T TELL YOU THE TRUTH! NOT **YET**! THAT WOULD SPOIL IT ALL FOR HER, DON'T YOU SEE THE **SECRET** SMILE ON HER FACE? **STOP KAYAKING! MAKE UP**...



IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO GO TO BED NOW!

CERTAINLY! COME! I'LL SHOW YOU YOUR ROOM!

IT'S NOT AN ELEGANT ROOM, MR. LOCKWOOD, NONE OF MINE ARE NOW. YOU UNDRESS, SLOW OUT THE CANDLE, AND SINK WITH EXHAUSTION INTO THE MUSTY OLD SOFT BED. AND YOU SLEEP. YOU SLEEP UNTIL YOU'RE WAKENED BY...



THE **BABY** AGAIN...

A-WAAHHHHHHH!  
A-WAAHHHHHHHHH!

DOES IT **COME** TO YOU NOW, LOCKWOOD? LISTEN **CAREFULLY**? WHY DOES THAT BABY'S PITIFUL WAILING STRIKE YOU AS **DIFFERENT**? **WHY? WHY?**...



I **KNOW**! IT'S TOO **LOUD**! HOW CAN A SMALL BABY CRY SO **LOUD**?

THAT'S IT, LOCKWOOD! SET UP! FACE THE FLOOR! THAT'S IT? **THINK!**...



I CAN'T SLEEP WITH **THAT** SOUND! OH! BUT THAT CRYING IS **ODD** SOMEHOW? **NOT** JUST PAIN? SOMETHING **ELSE**? SOMETHING I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON!

THAT'S **IT**, LOCKWOOD, YOU'RE ON THE **RIGHT** TRACK! **HURRY!** DISCOVER THE **TRUTH** AND **LEAVE** MY MOURNING TERROR-FILLED INSIDES. **RUN!** RUN FROM ME BEFORE IT'S TOO **LATE**...



I'VE GOT TO **SEE** THAT BABY! I'VE GOT TO... **WHAT'S THIS?**

YES! YEST YOUR DOOR IS LOCKED. SHE LOCKED YOU IN. WHY? TO PREVENT EXACTLY THIS...

NOW I KNOW SOMETHING'S WRONG! SHE WANTS TO KEEP ME FROM TAKING A LOOK AT THAT BABY!



THAT'S IT, LOCKWOOD! PUT YOUR SHOULDER TO THE DOOR! HEAVE! I'LL HELP YOU! I'LL WARP AND BUCKLE THE ROTTEN JAMB... LOOSEN MY HOLD ON THE HANDLE! THERE...

NOW WE'LL SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!



NO ONE HEARD... NOT ABOVE THAT LOUD, LOUD CATERWALLING OF HER GIGS. BABY. GO ON, LOCKWOOD... DOWN THE DIM HALLWAY... TO THE NURSERY DOOR. LOOK OUT!

Good?



PICK IT UP, LOCKWOOD! LOOK AT IT! STRANGE, ISN'T IT?

A RAG DOLL, SEWN TOGETHER FROM SCRAPS! BUT WHY WOULD SHE MAKE ONE SO BIG?



LISTEN, LOCKWOOD! STAND OUTSIDE THE NURSERY DOOR AND LISTEN! HEAR IT! HEAR IT...

IT'S SURE LOUD, ALL RIGHT! BUT THEN, OF COURSE, ALL SOUNDS SEEM LOUDER AT NIGHT... CONTRASTING AGAINST THE STILLNESS. ESPECIALLY A BABY'S CRY...



NO, LOCKWOOD! DON'T THINK OF BILLY EXPLANATIONS! DON'T GIVE UP AND GO BACK NOW. LISTEN! LISTEN TO THE OTHER SOUNDS... THE SOUNDS BEHIND THE BABY'S SCREAMING...

WHAT'S THAT? THE CLANKING OF CHAINS? WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?



PUSH OPEN THE DOOR, LOCKWOOD! PUSH OPEN THE NURSERY DOOR AND SEE!...

OH, MY LORD... CHORE...





YES, MR. LOCKWOOD! THAT HER "BABY" THAT'S DUMPLING!  
LOOK AT HIM. LOOK AT HIM AND BE SICK...



SHE COMES AT YOU, SNAKEBILLY. SHE'S JUST LIKE SHE WAS ALMOST 40 YEARS AGO, WANTING DESPERATELY TO KEEP HER INFANT FOREVER YOUNG... THE DEATH OF HER FATHER... WITH HER BLOOD SHE WASHED AWAY HIM TO MAKE HIM FAULT. SHE KEPT HIM A BABY IN MIND AS HE CRIED TO MAMMOOD IN HOOF. AND NOW, THIS NIGHT, HE IS DYING. AND YOU, YOU FOOL! YOU HAD TO BLUNDER IN. YOU HAD TO LET HER SURPRISE YOU...



AND NOW, AS THE BLACKNESS PAGES, YOU CAN SEE YOUR FUTURE, LOCK-  
WOOD... CLEARLY! YOU CAN SEE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE! I WARNED YOU! I TOLD YOU I REALLY DID!



OH, YOU SNEAKERS! TITTLE DUMPLING! MUMMY LOVE! YOU! MUMMY TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'LL BE SLEEPY! MUM-A-BYE BABY, IN THE TREE FOR WHEN THE WIND BLOWS.

YES, LOCKWOOD! THAT PHOTO WASN'T OF HER FATHER! THAT WAS HER HUSBAND. MRS. AGONY'S IS ALMOST 70! HER "BABY" IS ALMOST 40! THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND DURING THE WAR, LEAVING HER A WIDOW WITH AN INFANT SON, HAD DRIVEN HER MAD...



HE'S DYING! MY BABY IS DYING! YOU!!



...YOU HAD TO LET HER FIND YOU STARRING DOWN AT HER MAMMOOD BABY WITH YOUR BACK TURNED TO HER. YOU HAD TO LET HER COME UP BEHIND YOU WITH THE CLUB. YOU HAD TO TURN WHEN THE BLACKNESS CLOSED IN AS SHE STRUCK...

AND IT'S TIME FOR ME TO BLOW, KIDDEST THE MAMM-F-KEE! HEER AWAYS WITH A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE TALE FROM HIS COLLECTION. I'LL BE BACK LATER TO FEED YOU MORE FOUL FARE FROM MY DROGGET GARDEN! OH, AS FOR POOR MR. LOCKWOOD, I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HIM. HE'S REALLY HAPPY NOW. SEEMS HE LOST HIS MIND!



TOO MUCH HITTING THE JOFFLE, I GUESS! THE BUCKER! WELL, I GOTTA DELIVER SOME SHAPERS TO DEAR MRS. AGONY'S... SHE WERE OLD MAMMOOD, 'EYE!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, THIS IS THE SECOND OF THAT TERRIBLE TRIO OF LOATHSOME LAMENTS... THE SHOCKING-  
FICS... SPOOKING. THIS IS YOUR REVOLTING RELAYER OF RABID ROMANCES, YOUR VAULT-KEEPER, READY  
TO REVEAL A REBURRATING MURDER-FAR. I CALL THIS MOROSE MESS OF A MEMOIR...

# INDISPOSED!

HENRY SPINNED DOWN INTO THE BLOODY KITCHEN SINK, AND LISTENED WITH RAPTURE AND RELIEF AS THE BRAND NEW BARBARE DISPOSAL UNIT STUFFLED AND GRINDING AND SUCKING AND CHATTERING AND BEGAN TO HUM SMOOTHLY. IT HAD DONE ITS JOB WELL. HENRY NODDED WITH SATISFACTION, STOOPED, OPENED THE CABINET DOORS BELOW THE SINK, AND SWITCHED THE UNIT OFF. THE SILENCE OF THE HOUSE CLOSED IN AROUND HIM. HE TURNED AND KNELT AND BEGAN SPONGING UP THE POOL OF SCARLET ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR.



GOOD-BYE, MUM! AND GOOD  
NIGHTANCE...



HENRY WORKED SWIFTLY AND METICULOUSLY, WRINGING OUT THE BLOOD INTO THE SINK, THEN LATHERING THE LINOLEUM TILL IT GLEAMED CLEAN.

GET TO WORKING THE BOYS  
WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!



HE SCOURED THE BURN CAREFULLY, FINISHED OUT THE SPONGE, AND DROD HIS CLEAN WET HANDS ON A NEW KITCHEN TOWEL... EVERYTHING HAD BEEN TAKEN CARE OF, THERE WAS NO TRACE... NO SHAM... NOTHING TO ATTEST TO THE HEINOUS DEED HE'D JUST COMMITTED. HENRY SHOT A QUICK GLANCE AT THE CLOCK...

TOOK ME LONGER THAN I EXPECTED IT WOULD! IT'S BETTER GET DRESSED. IT'S ALMOST TIME...



HIS BLANCE FELL UPON THE CLEAVER AND THE HACK-SAW AND THE RAZOR-SHARP KITCHEN KNIFE LYING ON THE FORMICA KIDSBOARD, WIPED CLEAN OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN HIS FOLK ACCOMPLISHMENT.

WOULD TO PUT THOSE THINGS AWAY!



HE INSERTED THE KNIFE IN ITS WALL-PACK, HUNG THE CLEAVER ON ITS HOOK BELOW AND SLID THE HACK-SAW INTO THE TOOL DRAWER...

RITA NEVER LIKED MY TOOL DRAWER. IT WAS ALWAYS A Joke SHE USED TO SAY. HENRY? WELL, SHE WON'T COMPLAIN ABOUT THAT ANYMORE!



THE KITCHEN SPARKLED. HENRY TOOK ONE LAST LOOK AROUND, SATISFIED THAT EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT, AND SWITCHED OFF THE LIGHT. HE MOVED DOWN THE HALL TO THE BEDROOM, STEPPED OUT OF HIS RED-SPOTTED OVERALLS, REMOVED HIS CRIMSON-SWEATED SHIRT, AND STUFFED THEM INTO THE BATHROOM LAUNDRY HAMPER...

I'LL WASH THESE THINGS OUT TOMORROW WHEN THE SANE HAS GONE.



HE CHECKED HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR, RAN A COMB BRISKLY THROUGH HIS THINNING HAIR, AND HURRIED TO THE DOOR...



SHE HOME, HENRY?

SHE'S HOME?

LUCKY DEVIL!

WHILE THE CAT'S AWAY, EM, HENRY?

THEY MOVED INTO THE LIVING ROOM... LAUGHING... JOKE... CONGRATULATIVE HEART UPON HIS GOOD FORTUNE...



BOY, I WISH MY WIFE WOULD GO TO FLORIDA FOR A FEW WEEKS, HENRY!

SURE YOU WON'T BE HOME MUCH THESE MONTHS, EH, BOY?

WELL, WOULD THIS POOR CHANCE TO HOME!

HENRY LAUGHED GOOD-NATUREDLY, OPENING THE BAR-CONSOLE, LIFTING OUT THE GLASSES, THE WHISKEY, THE SODA...



HENRY WENT INTO THE KITCHEN...TURNED ON THE LIGHT...LOOKED AROUND. FOR A MOMENT, HIS HEART STOPPED. THERE WAS A BLOOD SPOT IN THE WALL. HE HURRIED TO IT AND WIPE IT UP WITH A SPIT-TLE-DAMPENED FINGER. MR. SOMERSCOT CAME UP BEHIND HIM...



HE WONDERED FOR A MOMENT IF GEORGE HAD BEEN. HE WONDERED IF GEORGE COULD HEAR HIS HEART BEATING SO WILDLY IN HIS CHEST. HE STEPPED TO THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR...TWUMS IT OPEN...



...AND REMOVED AN ICE-CUBE TRAY.



GEORGE FOLLOWED HENRY OUT OF THE KITCHEN, GLANSING BACK WISTFULLY...



THE WHISKEY AND ICE AND SODA SEEMED TO SHINE WARMTH INTO THE LIVING ROOM. HENRY SAT BACK SWELING...LISTENING TO THE IDLE CHATTER...THE LATEST JOKE...THE LAUGHTER. HENRY WAS CONTENT...



"THE GUY WITH THE HARBINE WIFE." THAT WAS HENRY. ALL RIGHT. NOT APPROPRIATE, THOUGH. RITA WOULDN'T READ HIM ANY MORE. RITA WAS DEAD. HENRY THOUGHT ABOUT RITA...THOUGHT ABOUT THE WAY IT USED TO BE.



YES, THAT'S THE WAY IT USED TO BE... JUST LIKE THE JOSE PHIL WAS TELLING. RITA'D BEEN A SHREW. SHE'D BARGAINED AND BARGAINED HEARTY OVER THE YEARS. UNMERCIFULLY. HENRY REMEMBERED...



LOOK AT THAT MUST ALL TRACKED UP! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO Wipe YOUR FEET BEFORE YOU COME INSIDE...

I'M SORRY, RITA...

HE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D MAKE HIM ACCOUNT TO HIM, FOR EVERYTHING...



YOU TOOK FIVE DOLLARS FOR AN ALLOWANCE THIS WEEK! WHAT HAPPENED TO IT? GO AHEAD! TELL ME! WHAT DID YOU SPEND FIVE DOLLARS ON?

PLEASE, RITA! I DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN IT AWAY. I DON'T OWE IT! I SPENT IT... ON CIGARETTES AND LUNCHEONS! ... I... OH, GET A PENCIL! I'LL WRITE YOU EVERY ITEM!

HE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D MAKE HIM MISS THOSE FINE NIGHTS OUT WITH THE BOYS...



BOWLING? OH, NO! NOT TONIGHT! I'M COOPED UP IN THIS HOUSE ALL DAY LONG! THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS STAY HOME WITH ME IN THE EVENING!

BUT, RITA! I DON'T ASK THAT OFTEN...

HE REMEMBERED HOW SHE'D RAIL...



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "YOU'RE TIRED"? SO AM I! DO YOU THINK I PLAY GAMES WHILE YOU'RE IN THE OFFICE? YOU'LL WASH THE DISHES! I'LL WIFE!

YES, RITA!

... AND RAIL...



WELL, IF YOU'VE MADE MORE MONEY, WE COULD AFFORD A CLOTHES ORDER! HOW DO MANY THERE UPON THE LINE?

YES, RITA...

... AND RAIL...



MRS. GREEN DOWN THE BLOCK HAS A BARBARA CHRISTMAS UNIT. HER HUSBAND HAS CONSIDERATION. SO, UNTIL YOU CAN BUY ME ONE... YOU CAN TAKE OUT THE BARBARA. HERE? HAS THE CAN'S FULL UNDER THE TREE?

YES, RITA!

WHAT WAS IT THAT FIRST GAVE HENRY THE IDEA HE TRIED TO REMEMBER. WAS IT THAT RADIO PROGRAM HE'D BEEN LISTENING TO WHEN RITA MADE HIM TURN IT OFF...



... WITHOUT A DOSE IT'S APPARENTLY DIFFICULT TO BREAK A CASE. CHEER, BUT JENNY MADE ONE MISTAKE, LIVING TAKEN A LONG TIME! WE FOUND WHAT WAS LEFT OF HER...

FOR BOB'S SAKE, TURN TWO SHOULD TURN OFF HENRY!

YES, RITA!

ON WAS IT RITA'S MARRIAGE?



NOW MRS. ELLER HAD A BARBARE DISPOSAL UNIT! SHE SAID IT'S WONDERFUL! SHE SAYS IT BRINGS UP BONES, EVEN SHE SAYS...

YES, RITA!

HENRY WASN'T QUITE SURE, ANYWAY, IT CAME TO HIM ONE NIGHT... JUST LIKE THAT! THE PERFECT WAY TO GET RID OF RITA, NO BONES NO TRACES!

WELL, HENRY! LONG TIME NO SEE! HOW COME YOU AIN'T BEEN COMING WITH US?

OH, RITA DOESN'T LET ME, GEORGE! LISTEN! I... I WANT INFORMATION!

SOMEONE GONE TO GEORGIA. GEORGE WAS A FRIEND. GEORGE WAS A PLUMBER, AND HE'D KILLED HIM...

GEORGE, HOW MUCH WOULD A BARBARE DISPOSAL UNIT COST?

I COULD FIND OUT, HENRY! WHY? THINKING OF SAVING THE WIFE A PRESENT?



YES, HENRY! I'M THINKING OF SAVING GEORGE HERE!

WELL, HENRY, I'LL TELL YOU SINCE YOU'RE MY FRIEND, I'LL DO IT FOR YOU. THEY SEEM TO BE GETTING POPULAR AND I NEED THE EXPERIENCE OF INSTALLING ONE. NEVER HAD A CHANCE BEFORE...



SO, I'LL CHARGE YOU FOR MATERIALS ONLY. LABOR IS FREE, WHATEVER IT COSTS ME, IT COSTS YOU. WE'LL BOTH BE DOING EACH OTHER A FAVOR! FAIR ENOUGH?

FAIR ENOUGH, GEORGE! THANKS A LOT!

THEN HE'D ANNOUNCED TO HIS WIFE...

I... I THINK YOU OUGHT TO GO TO FLORIDA FOR A FEW WEEKS, RITA. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN LOOKING WELL! I'VE GOT A BONUS COMING, AND...

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, HENRY? YOU TRYING TO GET RID OF ME?



GET RID OF YOU, RITA? WHY I'D BE LOST WITHOUT YOU! ABSOLUTELY LOST! I JUST THOUGHT...

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING BADLY LATELY FOR, HENRY! I THINK I WILL GO TO FLORIDA.



RITA'S ACTED EXACTLY AS HENRY HAD EXPECTED. SHE'D GLANCED TO ALL THE MIRRORS...

THAT'S RIGHT! I'M OFF TO FLORIDA TOMORROW NIGHT! HENRY GOT A BONUS! I JUST HOPE HE REMEMBERED HIMSELF WHILE I'M GONE!

FLORIDA? OH, YOU LUCKY BORE. WELL, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT HENRY, RITA! WE'LL KEEP OUR EYES ON HIM... GIVE YOU A FULL REPORT!



AND EARLY THIS MORNING, GEORGE'S CAME WITH THE DISPOSAL UNIT. HENRY'S TIMED EVERYTHING PERFECTLY. RITA WAS BUSY PACKING...

WELL? DID YOU TELL HER ABOUT THIS, YET?

NOT YET! JUST START INSTALL- LING IT! IT'LL BE A SURPRISE!



RITA'S WENT INTO THE KITCHEN AND TRAIKLED WITH DELIGHT...

WHAT'S TRUE? FOR HENRY? A BARBARE DISPOSAL UNIT? OH, YOU DARLING!

FOR WHEN YOU COME BACK, RITA!



AND HENRY'S TOLD GEORGE...

RITA'S LEAVING ON THE SIX O'CLOCK TRAIN, GEORGE'S IN TOUCH WITH THE BOYS? HAVE 'EM ALL COME OVER HERE TONIGHT? ABOUT NONE...

SURE THING. HENRY! WE'LL HAVE A REGULAR STAR PARTY! HEH, HEH! SO-M-N-ON-IT! HERE SHE COMES!



HE'D DRIVEN BACK, TURNED INTO THE GARAGE, CLOSED THE DOORS, BRANDED HER BODY FROM THE TRUNK, AND PROCEEDED TO DISMEMBER IT. HE'D SAWED AND HACKED AND CHOPPED IT INTO TINY PIECES AND DROVE THEM INTO THE CRAWLING, SPINNING, SUCKING BARBARE DISPOSAL...

WELL, HEH! WHO'LL THINK OF SEARCHING FOR WHAT'S LEFT OF RITA IN THE REFRIGERATOR WHEN SHE DOESN'T COME BACK FROM FLORIDA? AND JUST WHAT WILL THEY FIND?



AND SO, AT 8:40 THAT EVENING, HENRY'D BACKED THE CAR OUT OF THE GARAGE AND RITA'D WAVED GOOD-BYE TO EVERYBODY AND HE'D DRIVEN HER INTO TOWN TO CATCH THE 8PM TRAIN. ONLY, ON THE WAY, HE'D STOPPED, AND BEAT HER HEAD TO A BLOODY PULP...



HENRY BLINKED, ERASING THE BLODY SCENE FROM HIS MIND'S EYE. PHIL WAS FINISHING HIS JOKE AND EVERYBODY WAS LAUGHING...



GEORGE, THE PLUMBER, LOOKED UP.

YOU MEAN YOU  
HAVEN'T GOT  
FOWN WATER,  
HENRY?

ROPER? RITA  
MADE ME INSTALL  
SUN OWN WELL  
YEARS AGO. SHE  
SAID WE'D MAKE  
MONEY ON FAKED.



THEY ALL WENT INTO THE KITCHEN,  
LAUGHING. GEORGE LOOKED PUZZLED...

PHIL? I  
GOT TO  
FASTER?

WELL,  
WATER?  
WHEN I WAS  
A KID.

EXCHANGE  
ME?



GEORGE WENT DOWN INTO THE  
CELLAR. HENRY TURNED TO HIS  
GUESTS...

THE WELL IS DIRECTLY UNDER  
THE HOUSE? A PUMP BRINGS  
THE WATER UP THROUGH A  
PIPE IN THE CELLAR FLOOR.



...INTO A PRESSURE TANK?  
IT'S THE CLEANEST,  
FRESHEST, BEST TASTING  
WELL WATER YOU EVER  
DRANK? HERE...

HENRY? COME  
FOR A MINUTE,  
HENRY?



IT WAS GEORGE. HENRY WALKED ACROSS THE KITCHEN TO  
THE CELLAR DOOR WHERE HE STOOD. THE OTHERS STARED AT  
THE PLUMBER TIF...

HENRY? I... I FEEL TERRIBLE? I... I DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT THE WELL? I... I THOUGHT THE  
WELL WATER INTAKE WAS THE WASTE  
PIPE. I ATTACHED THE WASTAGE DISPOSAL  
UNIT TO IT! YOU... YOU HAVEN'T USED IT  
YET, HAVE YOU?



HENRY SPUN AROUND. THE OTHERS... PHIL... AND... BILL... AND... WERE  
STARING AT THE CRIMSON LIQUID AND BLOOD-UP RED FRESH-SLIME THAT  
GURED IN A CONTINUOUS SICKENING STREAM FROM THE KITCHEN SINK.



I-YES, GEORGE? I...  
I USED IT!

GOOD LORD?

CHUCKLE?

GAGG?

HEH, HEH? SO HENRY... THE DRIP...  
POURED OUT A CONFESSION TO  
THE BOYS UNEXPECTEDLY, CHUCKLED  
WELL, I MIGHT CALL THIS A 'WACK'  
YAWN. I MIGHT EVEN SAY I HAD TO  
'FORGET?' BUT I WON'T! PUMP  
LIES THAT CAN BE A 'SHAM' ON YOUR  
PATIENCE? I'LL JUST SAY IT WAS A  
FELP-SARN WITH  
EVERYTHING IN IT...  
PLUS THE KITCHEN  
SINK? HEH, HEH  
WELL, I'LL TURN YOU  
BACK TO THE OLD  
WITON NOW... FOR  
MORE OF HER BARBARIC  
AND THEN O.K. WILL  
'BRING' UP THE HAM...  
'BYE?'





# THIS IS WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IF RALPH HADN'T GONE **OUT COLD**



AT 5 O'CLOCK ON THE DOT, A SOFT CHIME ECHOED THROUGH THE OFFICES OF FUDGE PRODUCTS INC., ANNOUNCING TO THE RELIEVED STAFF THAT IT WAS GOING TIME. THE SCRATCHING OF PEN-POINTS ON LEDGERS, THE CHATTER OF TYPEWRITERS, THE CLICK-CLICK WHIRRING OF ADDING MACHINES ALL FADED AWAY. RALPH COOK HURRIEDLY THROUST THE 'N' ACCOUNTS BACK INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE FOLDERS, PUSHED HIS TRIVEL CHAIR AWAY FROM HIS DESK, AND STARTED TOWARD THE FILE CABINETS. AS HE CROSSED THE OFFICE, HE KEPT LOOKING BACK AT THE NEW GIRL THEY HAD HIRED. (THE REASON?) HE'D BEEN LOOKING AT HER ALL DAY. RALPH COOK THOUGHT THERE WAS 'SOMETHING' ABOUT HER. EYES OFF BEAUTIFUL WILMA DOONE...



FEET HEELS CLICKED AND HEAVY BOLES THUMPED ACROSS THE MARBLE FLOOR TO THE DOORWAY, BARRIN TO REACH THE ELEVATORS THAT WOULD TAKE THEM TO STREET LEVEL, AND THROUGH TWENTY STORIES BELOW...



SOON, EVERYONE IN THE OFFICE HAD LEFT... EVERYONE, THAT IS, EXCEPT WILMA AND RALPH. HIS HEART POUNDED WITH EXCITEMENT. WHILE, SINCE THAT MORNING, HAD BEEN MERELY A WAGUE DREAM, THEN A FAINT HOPE, WAS NOW A THRILLING CERTAINTY...



HELLO! **WELMA** HIGHEST EVEN AN **OLD MAN** LIKE **ME** CAN GET **ROMANCE**, BUT **DON'T** GET **OFFERED** THERE IS **GOING** TO FOLLOW! FOR EXAMPLE, I **GOING** TELL YOU HOW THESE **TWO MUST** HAVE GOTTEN TO-GETHER. WHAT A **BLOOD-CURDLING** STORY THAT **WOULD** HAVE BEEN...



**RALPH** WOULD HAVE OFFERED **WELMA** A LIFT HOME IN HIS CAR. AND SHE'D HAVE ACCEPTED, HAPPILY. IN A FEW MINUTES, THEY'D HAVE BEEN CALLING EACH OTHER BY THEIR FIRST NAMES...



I HAVE A CONFES-  
SION TO MAKE,  
**WELMA**. I **HAVEN'T**  
BEEN ABLE TO TAKE  
MY EYES OFF YOU  
ALL DAY.

BETTER KEEP  
THEM ON THE  
ROAD, **RALPH**,  
IF YOU WANT  
TO GET ME  
HOME HOME  
FIRE!

AND AS THEY REACHED **WELMA'S** TREE-SHED STREET IN THE **BURBANKS**, **RALPH** WOULD HAVE NOTICED SEVERAL **BLACK CATS** FLICKING IN HIS CAR'S PATH. AND **WELMA** WOULD HAVE CRIED OUT TO HIM IN AN **ANGRY** VOICE...



DON'T STOP FOR  
THEM! RUN THEM  
OVER! KILL  
THEM!

WELMA! WHAT I  
COULDN'T  
DO THAT!



I'M... I'M **SORRY**, **RALPH**! I  
JUST **DESPISE** CATS! **DON'T**  
AND ME **WHY**? I **CAN'T**  
EXPLAIN...

I **DON'T** CARE, **HONEY**!  
AS LONG AS YOU **DON'T**  
DESPISE ME...

HE'D HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH **WELMA'S** LOVELY HOME, AND, HOLDING HER HAND, **RALPH** WOULD HAVE ESCORTED HER TO THE DOOR...



HOW ABOUT GOING OUT  
WITH ME TOMORROW NIGHT,  
**WELMA**? WE CAN TAKE IN  
A SHOW... DINNER...  
ANYTHING YOU  
LIKE...

I'D LOVE TO GO OUT WITH  
YOU, **RALPH**, BUT NOT AT NIGHT  
THIS WEEK. I WANT TO GET  
MY SLEEP FOR MY NEW  
JOB. I WOULDN'T WANT TO  
GET FIRED NOW THAT YOU  
AND I...

SHE'D HAVE SMILED AT HIM WARMLY AND AGREED TO GO OUT WITH HIM THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY AFTERNOON. THEY'D HAVE TAKEN A WALK THROUGH THE PARK, GONE THROUGH THE ZOO. BY THEN, HE'D HAVE BEEN FEASTING HIS EYES ON HER BEAUTIFUL FACE... HER GLORIOUS FIGURE... THE WAY THE SUNLIGHT GLEAMED ON HER SOFT RED HAIR...



AREN'T THEY **CUTE**, **RALPH**? LOOK HOW THAT ONE  
ALMOST TALKED TO YOU WITH HIS **EYES**, ALL  
RIGHT, FELLOW... HERE'S A **PEANUT** FOR YOU...

AND **RALPH** WOULD HAVE ADORED THE WAY **WELMA'S** FACE FLUSHED WITH **ANGRY** LOATHING AND HER **GREEN** EYES FLASHED THEIR **HATE** WHEN THEY'D GONE TO THE **PANTHER'S** CAGE. FOR BY THEN, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN **MAD**, **BLINDLY** IN LOVE WITH HER...



LOOK AT HIM, **RALPH**! SEE, **SMILING**,  
**BEASTLY** CHORE... OH, HOW I **HATE**  
CATS! TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE...  
TAKE ME HOME!

SURE,  
**HONEY**...

SO RALPH WOULD HAVE TAKEN WILMA HOME...

AREN'T YOU GOING TO INVITE ME IN, WILMA?

ANOTHER TIME, RALPH DO YOU HEARD? I HAVE A SPLITTING HEADACHE!



OH, I'M SORRY, BUT AND I WAS GOING TO TAKE YOU OUT TOMORROW. HOWEVER, I'LL FORGIVE YOU IF YOU'LL LET ME PICK YOU UP TOMORROW...



OF COURSE, RALPH! WE CAN RIDE OUT INTO THE COUNTRY! I'D ENJOY THAT...

RALPH WOULD HAVE DRIVEN HOME, HIS CAR FLOATING LIKE A PINK CLOUD, CARRYING HIM TO A LAND OF HAPPY HUNGRY DREAMS. AND, BEHOLD WILMA'S BEAUTIFUL FACE IN HIS MIND, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN ONLY MOMENTARILY TROUBLED BY THE FLEETING THOUGHT...

NEVER SAW ANYONE WHO HATED CATS SO? OH, WELL... A PROMISE, I SUPPOSE...



BUT, IN ANOTHER INSTANT, THAT MEMORY WOULD HAVE VANISHED...

TOMORROW, I'LL FIND JUST THE RIGHT BETTING TO PUT HER IN THE RIGHT MOOD... AND THEN I'LL ASK HER TO MARRY ME!



THE NEXT DAY WOULD HAVE BEEN A WONDERFUL ONE FOR RALPH... WARM AND SUNNY. AND, EXCEPT FOR THE SMALL, DISTURBING INCIDENT THAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED WHEN HE CALLED FOR WILMA...

DON'T BOTHER TO COME IN, RALPH! I'LL GET MY COAT AND BE RIGHT WITH YOU.

PECULIAR! SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT TO LET ME PAST THE FRONT DOOR...



WILMA WOULD HAVE FORGOTTEN AND LEFT THE DOOR SLIGHTLY Ajar, AND THE BIG BLACK CAT WOULD'VE PLEADED OUT, PURRING AND RUBBING AGAINST RALPH'S LEGS...

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED! AND I THOUGHT WILMA COULDN'T STAND CATS...



AND A FEW SECONDS LATER, RALPH'S BEAUTIFUL RED-HEAD WOULD HAVE PUSHED OUT AFTER THE CAT, HER EYES GLAZING IN FURY. THE CAT WOULD'VE ARCHED ITS BACK, SITTING AND BARRING ITS PAINS AT THE SIGHT OF HER...

KEEP AWAY FROM HIM, YOU TREACHEROUS BLACK HELLION!

WILMA!



BUT THE INCIDENT WOULD HAVE BEEN QUICKLY FORGOTTEN BY RALPH, WHOSE HEART AND MIND WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO FULL OF LOVE FOR WILMA TO HARBOR ANY BAD THOUGHTS OF HER, AND THEY'D HAVE DRIVEN OUT TO SOME CALM, QUIET, RUSTIC SPOT... AND HE'D HAVE PROPOSED...

OH, DARLING! I DO WANT YOU... YOU'LL NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH, BUT I CAN'T MARRY YOU...

BUT WHY, DEAR? IF TWO PEOPLE LOVE EACH OTHER, NOTHING ELSE SHOULD MATTER, WOULDN'T YOUR FAMILY APPROVE OF ME?



IT'S... I'D LIKE TO MEET YOUR FAMILY, WILMA... YOUR FATHER... YOUR MOTHER. THEY MUST BE WONDERFUL PEOPLE TO HAVE A DAUGHTER LIKE YOU...

MY FATHER IS DEAD! AND MY MOTHER... I HATE HER WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL... WITH EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH IN MY BODY, I HATE HER...



RALPH COULD HAVE BEEN SHOCKED AT THE COLD BITTER MALICE IN WILMA'S VOICE...

YOUR MOTHER, WILMA? HOW CAN YOU HATE YOUR OWN MOTHER?

SHE'S NOT MY REAL MOTHER! SHE'S MY STEP-MOTHER! OH, PLEASE I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HER ANY MORE! IT'S SPOILED THE WHOLE DAY FOR ME...



RALPH WOULD HAVE WORKEED ABOUT WHAT WILMA HAD SAID, AND THE NEXT MORNING, HE'D HAVE COME TO A DECISION, HE'D HAVE CALLED HIS BOSS AND TOLD A WHITE LIE...

I DON'T STAY OUT OFTEN, MR. PIERCE, BUT I'M JUST TOO SICK TO WORK TODAY...



AND HE'D HAVE LEFT HIS APARTMENT PLANNING EXACTLY WHAT HE WAS GOING TO SAY TO WILMA DOONE'S STEP-MOTHER...

I'LL MAKE HER UNDERSTAND THAT WILMA AND I LOVE EACH OTHER AND SHE CAN'T STAND IN OUR WAY...



HE'D HAVE GROWN MORE AND MORE UNEASY WITH EACH BLOCK HE'D PASSED BRINGING HIM NEARER TO THE DOONE HOME... AND BY THE TIME HE'D ARRIVED, HE'D HAVE BEEN SHAKING WITH NERVOUSNESS...

IF SHE'S AS BAD AS WILMA SAYS SHE IS, SHE MAY NOT LISTEN TO REASON, WELL... I'M NOT GOING TO BACK DOWN NOW.



RALPH WOULD HAVE FORCED HIMSELF TO WALK TO THE DOOR, AND HE'D HAVE PRESSED THE DOOR BELL WITH TREMBLING HAND. IT WOULD HAVE BOUNDED LIKE THE BELL OF DOOM TO HIM...

WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG? HADN'T SHE'S NOT HOME? MAYBE...

PERFECT WHO IS IT?



MRS. DOOGUE WOULD HAVE LET RALPH INTO THE HOUSE, AND HE'D HAVE BEEN ASTONISHED TO SEE WHAT A SWEET-LOOKING LITTLE OLD LADY SHE WAS, WITH A KINDLY LIGHT IN HER SOFT BLUE EYES, AND A WRINKLED FACE WEATHERED IN A PLEASANT SMILE...

YOU'RE A FRIEND OF WILMA'S, YOU SAY? HOW BOLD? WILMA'S AT HOME, BUT WHY DON'T YOU COME IN, MR. CORWELL?



COMRADE, MRS. DOOGUE, RALPH CORWELL, THANK YOU! THERE IS SOME-THING I'D LIKE TO TALK OVER WITH YOU.



RALPH WOULD HAVE LIKED THE OLD LADY RIGHT OFF, HER BROTHERLY MANNER WOULD'VE FILLED HIM WITH THE CONFIDENCE HE NEEDED TO LAY HIS HEART BARE BEFORE HER. AND AS HE SPOKE, HER CATS WOULD HAVE COME OUT AND PURRED AROUND HIM.

YOU SEE, MR. CORWELL, THE MOMENT I SAW YOU, I KNEW YOU WERE GOOD! MY CATS LOVE YOU!



COMRADE, MRS. DOOGUE! BUT PLEASE... CALL ME RALPH! NOW, ABOUT WILMA AND ME? I... THAT IS, WE...



HE'D HAVE TOLD HER OF HIS LOVE FOR WILMA AND HE'D HAVE BEGGED FOR AND GOTTEN HER APPROVAL... AND BEFORE LONG...

FIVE-FIFTY? SAY IT'S BETTER BE BOLD! WILMA WILL BE HOME FROM WORK SOON AND I DON'T THINK SHE'S LOST MY BEDDING YOU BEHIND HER BACK!



OH, POPPYDOCK, YOUNG MAN! I INSIST THAT YOU STAY TO DINNER, LET ME POUR SOME OF THIS WINE...



WHEN WILMA WOULD HAVE COME HOME, SHE'D HAVE SHOUTED ANGRILY AT HER STEP-MOTHER THE MOMENT SHE'D SEEN RALPH BROWING DROWSY FROM HIS SECOND GLASS OF WINE.

OH! N'LO, WILMA... SEE, FEEL... SLEEP...



YOU DID IT AGAIN, YOU WRETCH! YOU TRICKED ME AGAIN!



I DID NO SUCH THING! HE CAME OF HISSELF ACCORD.



RALPH'S BODY WOULD HAVE GRADUALLY BEGUN TO ACHIEVE AS EVERY BONE AND MUSCLE TIGHTENED, THEN BURN BURN.

YOU PUT SOME OF THAT STUFF IN HIS WINE!



THAT STUFF, AS YOU CALL IT, IS MY BEST PORTION...



AND HE WOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT HE COULD NO LONGER MOVE... THAT HE WAS PARALYZED. HE WOULD BE ABLE TO DO NOTHING BUT WATCH THE HARBOR-CHILLING CHANGE COME OVER WITHER DOOGUE...

NO, YOU WRETCH! WHO'S WON'T LET YOU HAVE HIM! NOT FINE ONE!



DON'T BE AN IDIOT, WILMA. HOW MANY OPPORTUNITIES DO WE HAVE TO GET FRESH MEAT? YOU... AND MY CATS!



DO YOU THINK MY CATS LIKE THE STINKING ROTTEN DEAD MEAT YOU DRAIN HOME FROM YOUR GRAVE-DIGGINGS, YOU BASTARD!



SHUT UP! SHUT UP!



YEE, RALPH WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING... EXCEPT LISTEN AND WATCH AS THE OLD LADY WHIPPED THE CLEAVER AND WILMA PLEADED WITH HER.

PLEASE! NOT THIS ONE! I WANTED HIM... FOR A HUSBAND! A WOMAN NEEDS A MAN... EVEN IF SHE IS A BRIDE! YOU GOT THE OTHERS! LEAVE THIS ONE. I'LL BRING THE DATE MEAT...

IT'S TOO LATE, YOU FOOL! HE KNOWS NOW! HOW COULD YOU EXPECT HIM TO LOVE YOU NOW...

HE'LL LOOK AT YOU AND HE WON'T SEE YOUR BEAUTY ANY MORE. HE'LL SEE YOU SCRATCHING AT GRAVES... DRIVING DOWN TO THE HOTTING DOFFING WITH THEIR MOLDY PUTRESCENT COMPIRES... AND FEARING AT THEIR FLESH...

THAT'S RIGHT, RALPH! SHE IS! IT'S NO GOOD ANY MORE! I TRIED TO HIDE IT FROM YOU! I TRIED.

NO! NO! NO!



AND THE LAST THING RALPH WOULD HAVE REMEMBERED BEFORE HE DIED WAS THE ANNOYING SPITTING OF THE HORRIFY CATS AND THE WHINING OF THE CLEAVER AS THE OLD LADY HACKED AT HIM AND WILMA'S VOICE LAUGHING... LAUGHING...

I HOPE HE'S AS GOOD AS THE OTHERS...

YAAAAAAAAAAAAA



WELL, RALPH WAS LUCKY, KIDDER! KERRY LUCKY! HE WAS SO ABSORBED IN WILMA'S EXOTIC BEAUTY, HE DIDN'T LOOK WHERE HE WAS GOING...

AS I SAID, KIDDER, I COULD HAVE TOLD YOU THAT STORY! BUT ACTUALLY, YOU SEE, THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED! THAT'S WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED TO RALPH IF HE DIDN'T... WELL, LET'S GO BACK! YOU REMEMBER HE WAS IN THE OFFICE, ALONE WITH WILMA, WALKING TOWARD THE FILE CABINETS... AND SHE WAS STALLING, AND BAITING HIM THE EVE... INVITING HIM TO A HORRIBLE FATE...



... MISSED THE FILE CABINETS, AND WENT OUT THE OPEN WINDOW, PLUNGING TWENTY STORIES TO THE STREET BELOW...



I'LL OFFER TO BRING HER HOME... ASK HER FOR A DATE... AND... DOOPS...



YAAAAAAAAAAAAA

WHY, THE STUPID BASTARD!

... TO A VERY EASY DEATH!

THE OTHER END

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, HERE! AND NOW, IT'S WIND-UP TIME IN D.M.'S MORBID MAG. AND YOUR HOST IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, IS READY TO PUT A FINAL FEEBLE FINIS TO THE FESTERING FESTIVITIES WITH A BLOOD-CURLING TALK ABOUT THE FROZEN NORTH. THIS CHILLING TALE IS CALLED...

## THE LIGHT IN HIS LIFE!

THE WIND HOWLED AND BLEW FIERCELY AROUND THE LONE MAN ON FLOODING SNOWSHOES STRUGGLING THROUGH THE WINTER WASTELANDS. SNOW STILL LAY IN A THICK WHITE CARPET AS FAR AS HIS ACHING, TEARING EYES COULD SEE, EVEN THOUGH THE SPRING THAW HAD BEGUN BACK AT THE RIVER. SNEEZING... HIS BREATH FROSTING WHITELY IN A CLOUD AND TURNING TO ICE ON HIS CHEEKS... THE MAN STUMBLED ON, AND AT LAST SAW THE WELCOME LIGHT BEAMING INTO THE BATHING DARKNESS AHEAD... THE TRAPPER'S CABIN... NESTLED AMONG THE TOWERING SNOW-LADEN PINES...



HE DIDN'T HAVE TO KNOCK WITH HIS NUMBED HANDS. THE DOOR OPENED BEFORE HIM AND HE LUNCHED IN ON HALF-FROZEN FEET, ESCORTED BY A LAST FLURRY OF SNOW, WHIPPED IN BY THE SHRIeking, CRUEL WIND.



AFTER A WHILE, AS THE PENETRATING WINDS OF THE FIREPLACE STOLE THROUGH THE VISITOR'S SHIVERING BODY AND THE BLISSINESS DRAINED AWAY FROM HIS LIFE... HE SPOKE...

LORD! I NEVER KNEW ALASKA WOULD BE THIS COLD! MY NAME'S **RED GRAY**... JUST UP FROM THE STATES LOOKING TO SETTLE DOWN IN THESE PARTS AND TRY MY LUCK AT TRAPPING...

WOW, RED? WELL, I'VE BEEN TRAPPING THESE PARTS FOR **WHOLE A SPELL**... AND I'M READY TO PULL UP STAKES AND GOIT, MYSELF...



YER, I KNOW. THEY TOLD ME BACK AT THE SETTLEMENT THAT JAKE BARRON WOULD SELL OUT HIS CABIN AND LEASE. I CAME TO MAKE FEELS AND BUY YOU OUT...

WELL... GOOD-KNOOD! JUST LE ME KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WILLIN' T' PAY? I'M READY TO START PACKIN' RIGHT AWAY...



THE TWO MEN SETTLED THE MATTER SWIFTLY, AND RED GRAY WAS SURPRISED AT THE REASONABLE TERMS. SOMETIME, JAKE BARRON APPEARED ANXIOUS TO GO... WHICH SEEMED ODD TO RED...

PARDON MY **CURIOUSITY**, JAKE... BUT WHY ARE YOU GUITTING EVERYONE SAYS YOU GOT **WINTER HOOD** TRAPPING UP HERE... PLENTY OF SILVER FOX... LYIN' BEAVERS... **EVENT-THING!**

SON, THIS A **LOMLY** LIFE... **WINTER HOOD** LONELY! IT CAN GET ON YOUR NERVES AFTER A WHILE! YOU MARRIED?



WHY, RED? MY WIFE'S WAITING BACK AT THE SETTLEMENT? SOON AS THE FRAM CLEARS THE FRAM, I'LL BRING HER UP. MUST BE **COZY** HERE THROUGH THE WINTER... BETTER BY THE WARM FIRE AND...

COZY? YOU SAY! LE ME WARN YOU, SON! ALASKA'S GOT **LOTS**, **HARDEN** WINTER! SOMETIMES YOU GET SNOWED IN FOR **WEEKS**... **EVIN MONTHS**...



A MAN AND HIS WIFE TRAPPED IN A LITTLE CABIN FOR SO LONG... WITH NOTHIN' T' DO BUT LOOK AT EACH OTHER... WELL, IT AN'T SO COZY!

SPEAKING OF WIFE, JAKE... **WHERE'S YOURS?** THEY SAID BACK AT THE SETTLEMENT...



SHE... SHE... WELL, SON, IT'S A **LOW** STORY. YOU WANT TO HEAR IT THOUGH. YOU WANT **THINK** **FORCE** ABOUT BRINGIN A **WOMAN** UP HERE. AM SORRY I CAN'T LEAVE TILL MORNING **ANYWAY**, I WANT AS WELL TELL IT TO YOU...



THE TWO MEN SETTLED DOWN, STUFFED THEIR PIPES, AND LIT UP. CURIOUSITY COMBINED RED GRAY AS HE WAITED FOR THE STORY TO BEGIN. JAKE'S EYES NARROWED, FOCUSING THIMSELVES UPON THE FLICKERING OIL LAMP ON THE TABLE. THE TRAPPER STARED MOODY AT THE DANCING FLAME WITH A SECRET SMILE TUGGING AT HIS LIPS, BEFORE HIS VOICE ROSE ABOVE THE WIND, WHILING OUTSIDE LIKE A LIGHT BOLT...

HAD A **SLITTING** BARK ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF JANUARY. IT WAS A **WHOPPER**...





"SNOW PILED UP TO THE ROOF. WE COULDN'T EVEN OPEN THE DOOR WITH THE SNOW PRESSIN' AGAINST IT. MIRANDA AND I WERE SHOWN IN FOR QUITE A LONG SPELL."



"DAY AFTER DAY, THEN, THERE WAS NOTHING TOO BUT EAT AN' SLEEP AN' KILL TIME. MIRANDA PLAYED SOLITAIRE MOSTLY... THAT, AND ATE."



"FUNNY HOW A SOUND-LIKE MUNCHER CAN GET ON YOUR NERVES WHEN IT DOES ON LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME. IF IT WEREN'T FOR MY BOOKS, IT WOULD'VE PROBABLY DRIVEN ME BATS AFTER THE FIRST WEEK. BUT I KEPT READIN' AN' IMAGININ' MIRANDA'S STUFFIN' HIMSELF."



"MR. I'M A GREAT READER! HAD A GOOD STOCK OF BOOKS ON HAND TOO. HER EATIN' AND MY READIN' KEPT US OUT OF EACH OTHER'S HAIR. I SWEBS, BUT THE SNOW KEPT RALLIN'... PILEIN' UP... AN' WE WERE KEPT PRISONERS LONGER THAN WE EXPECTED."



"WITH ME NOT ABLE TO GET OUT AND GET TO THE SETTLEMENT FOR SUPPLIES, IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG BEFORE I REALIZED..."



"TO MIRANDA, ALWAYS A HONCH EATER, THE IDEA OF CONSERVING FOOD WAS THE WORST KIND OF TORTURE. SHE WAS MISERABLE FROM THEN ON AS EACH MEAL WAS REDUCED TO A BIT OF DRIED FISH, WASHED DOWN WITH SOME WEAK COFFEE..."



"MIRANDA POINTED TO MY OIL LAMP."



"JAKE! FOR GOD'S SAKE! I'M HUNGRY! I'M STARVING TO DEATH! I CAN'T STAND IT..."

"YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO STAND IT, YOU FAT FOOL... WHAT'LL YOU EAT WHEN FOOD IS GONE?"

"WHAT ABOUT THAT? THE WHOLE OIL YOU BURN IN THAT LAMP... JUST TO READ SOME STUPID BOOKS? THAT'S GOOD HIGH FOOD... WHOLE OIL? AND YOU'RE BASTARDING IT!"

"DON'T YOU EVER FORGODD THAT OIL NEVER? THAT'S FOR ME TO READ BY! UNDERSTAND?"

"MIRANDA DIDN'T UNDERSTAND, OF COURSE. SHE COULDN'T SEE THAT MY BOOKS... MY PRECIOUS READINGS... WAS A TREASURE THAT KEPT ME FROM GOING MAD... OCCUPYING MY MIND DURING THOSE LONG DRAINING HOURS... DAYS... WEEKS... ETERNITIES."

OH, YOU WON'T **STARVE**, MIRANDA... NOT WITH ALL THAT **FAT** YOU FLOAT IN! YOU COULD PROBABLY **HYPERMATE** FOR **WEEKS**... LIKE A **BEAR** SO STOP TRYING TO MAKE ME **FIFT** YOU!

SO... SO...  
SO **HOMERTY**?

TRUBLE WAS, MIRANDA HAD NOTHING TO KEEP HER MIND OCCUPIED... NOTHING BUT THE THOUGHT OF HOW HER GROWING STOMACH CRAVED FOOD. IT WAS A DAY OR SO LATER... WHEN I WAS REFILLING THE LAMP... THAT I NOTICED...

THAT'S FUNNY! OIL'S SETTING **LOW**! THE LAMP **ISN'T** BURNING IT UP THAT FAST! UNLESS... **UNLESS**...

"I FOUGHT OFF SLEEP THAT NIGHT... FOUGHT TO KEEP AWAKE, AND WERE ENOUGH, WHEN MIRANDA THOUGHT I WAS ASLEEP, SHE GOT UP OUT OF BED, TIPTOED TO THE WHALE-OIL KEEL, AND..."

I SPRANG AT HER IN A FURY... CHAINED HER... PULLED THE KEYS FROM HER FAT GREASY HANDS..."

"FOR A MOMENT I WANTED TO **KILL** HER, AND THEN I **REMEMBERED**! EVEN WITH THE WHALE OIL SOME, I COULD STILL READ..."

YOU ONLY TUNE OF **LAND**! YOU AND YOUR **STUPID BOOKS**! WILL MY **STOMACH** IS MORE **IMPORTANT** TO ME!

**TALLOW CANDLES**, MADE FROM **WHALE BLUBBER**! THEY'LL GIVE ME THE LIGHT I NEED...

SURPRISE...  
SURPRISE...

STOP IT!  
STOP!

"BY BURNING SEVERAL CANDLES AT ONCE, I OBTAINED ENOUGH LIGHT TO READ BY. AND ONCE MORE I SETTLED DOWN TO LONG, QUIET, SATISFYING HOURS OF READING IN MY PRINTED PLEASURES..."

UNTIL... ONE DAY...

THE CANDLES! WHY THERE'VE ONLY A **FEW** LEFT! BUT I **DIDN'T** BURN THEM! THERE WERE **PLENTY**...OH... MIRANDA!  
**MIRANDA!**

RIPAWAY! NO, YOU  
TOUCH MY CANDLES!  
ANSWER ME!

OF COURSE  
MORT! LET ME  
BOY! WH-  
WHAT WOULD  
I DO WITH  
THESE? HAYES!  
MR...WATES THE  
RATS? SURE!  
THAT'S IT!

"SHE WAS TIGHT! COVERING UP! I  
KNEW IT! I TRIED TO FORCE THE  
TRUTH FROM HER, BUT SHE KEPT  
DENYING IT..."

YOU FEMALE  
BURN! WHERE ARE  
MY CANDLES?  
ANSWER ME!

AME...DON'T!  
LET ME BOY!  
IT'S RATS! I  
TELL YOU!  
I HEARD THEM  
SCURRYING  
LAST NIGHT!

"I WANTED TO STRANGLE HER BUT  
MY FINGERS ONLY SANK INTO FLABBY  
FAT FOLDS OF HER NECK, AND I DON'T  
HAVE THE STRENGTH TO PENETRATE  
THAT PROTECTION..."

BOATED TUB OF LARD...

"I SAVED UP! I LET HER GO, BUT IN THE MIDDLE OF  
THE NIGHT, AS I LAY BEDDLED AND YAWNING,  
HEARD THE GRAWING AND MUNCHING..."

CHOMP...CHOMP...  
CHOMP...

WHAT'S THAT CHERRING  
SOUND? IS IT RATS,  
AFTER ALL, IS MY  
CANDLEST?

"YEAH, IT WAS A RAT, ALL RIGHT! A BIG, FAT FEMALE  
RAT THREE INCHES..."

...EATING MY CANDLES?  
FOR? YOU

THERE WAS ONLY ONE CANDLE LEFT. I SCREAMED AT HER.

LEAVE IT! YOU ATE ALL THE  
OTHERS! DOZENS OF THEM!  
LEAVE ME THE LAST ONE!  
PLEASE! PLEASE!

I'M HUNGRY!

"SHE FOUGHT FIERCELY... LIKE A WILD ELEPHANT, SHE  
MANAGED TO MOVE ME AWAY AND CRAM THE LAST CANDLE  
DOWN HER GREEDY BULLET..."

DIAT, FAT, OVERSTUFFED  
BLOB...

CHOMP...  
CHOMP...

THEN HE WIPED HER BLOODSTAINED LIPS DELIBERATELY... IN FRONT OF ME, DRINKING...

I'LL FILL YOU FOR THAT, MIRANDA! I'LL...

GO AHEAD! SHOOT! HAH! HA! SHOOT!

"SHE LAUGHED AT ME... MOCKED ME... KNOWING SHE WAS SAFE..."

TAKEN WHAT WILL YOU GO? ... BUT HERE WITH MY BODY HOTTING UP! INTO A STUPID MESS?

SHUT UP! SHUT UP! YOU... YOU...

"EVEN THE WOOD SUPPLY FOR THE FIREPLACE WAS RUNNING LOW. MY EYES TURNED BLOODSHOT AND SWARTED AND GAVE ME INTOLERABLE HEADACHES, AS I WAS FORCED TO READ BY THE DIM, SIZZLING FIRE-LIGHT..."

SHE CAN'T EAT FOOD, TRANS HAVENS! BUT MY EYES... LORD...

"SUDDENLY I THOUGHT OF ONE LAST WAY TO FURNISH MYSELF WITH WOOD: READING LIGHT..."

THESE UNCURED FURS? I COULD SCRAPE OFF THE EXCESS ANIMAL FAT... BURN IT DOWN... BURN IT IN THE LAMP.

"I SPENT THE WHOLE DAY CAREFULLY SCRAPING OFF EVERY SHRED OF FATTY TISSUE, STILL CLINGING TO THE HIDES, HOARDING EACH KNIFE-BLIVER INTO A CAN, AS IF IT WERE GOLD..."

FRESH! AWFUL SMELL! BUT I'LL BE ABLE TO READ MY BOOKS AGAIN WITHOUT GOING BLIND!

"I FELL EXHAUSTED INTO BED THAT NIGHT, EVERY MUSCLE IN MY BODY ACHED. I WAS TIRED BUT HAPPY."

TOMORROW, I'LL RENDER THE FAT. BURN IT DOWN IN THE IRON POT. GOOD ANIMAL GREASE... TO BURN... TO READ BY...

YAWN...

"BUT IN THE MORNING, WHEN I LOOKED INTO THE CAN THAT SHOULD HAVE HELD THE SCRAPS OF ANIMAL FAT THAT I'D PAINFULLY COLLECTED, BIT BY BIT..."

EMPTY! EMPTY! MIRANDA! DID YOU

"SHE SAT THERE, SWAINING, WIPING THE LAST OF THE PLATE... LICKING HER STUBBY LITTLE GREASY FINGERS... AND MOODING ME."

"DID I WHAT, JAKE? DID I EAT YOUR ANIMAL-FAT SHAWNEE? WELL, OF COURSE, YOU FOOL! KIND OF RANDED... BUT I DIDN'T MIND! I WAS HUNGRY."



"I LOOKED AT HER... AND YET I DIDN'T SEE HER. I SAW MY LAST CHANCE SLIPPING AWAY. I FELT MY EYES SMART AND TEAR EVEN IN ANTICIPATION OF READING BY FIRELIGHT AGAIN. I FELT MY HEADACHE RETURN... THROBBING... THROBBING... AND MIRANDA SWAM BEFORE ME... LIKE A BIG FAT RUBBER BALL-LOON, SWIMMING IN THE WIND."

"JAKE? WHAT IS IT, JAKE? JAKE?"



JAKE BARROW PAUSED, HE SMILED AND NICHED. HE WAS STILL STARRING FIXATED AT THE HISsing, DANCING FLAME OF THE OIL LAMP. THEN, HE WENT ON...

"SO THAT'S THE STORY, NOW! THAT'LL GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF WHAT AN ALASKAN WINTER CAN DO TO A MAN AND WIFE SNOWBUNDLED TOGETHER..."

"BUT, JAKE? YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO MIRANDA?"



JAKE LOOKED AT HIS SHEET AND SMILED...

"HEND YOUR WIFE BACK TO HOME, DON'T GET IN A GOOD SUPPLY OF BOOKS! NOTHING LIKE CURLEUP UP WITH A GOOD BOOK BY AN OIL LAMP ON DARK WINTER SNOWED-IN NIGHTS..."

"THE OIL LAMP? IT... I... I THOUGHT YOU SAID MIRANDA DROPT UP ALL THE WHALE OIL AND... AND THOSE YELLOW SAMPLES WHERE DID YOU GET THOSE?"



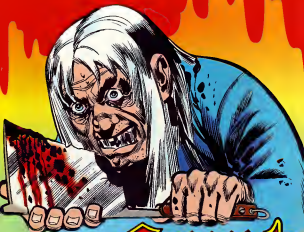
BESIDE JAKE, ON THE TABLE, THE OIL LAMP FLICKERED. JAKE GLANCED AT ITS FLAME AND BACK TO BED, AND ONCE MORE, THAT SECRET LITTLE SMILE TUGGED AT HIS MOUTH...



"CHOICE..."

"HER, HEN? OF COURSE, ALL YOU FRIENDS HAVE MISSED JAKE BARROW'S CHAUNNIN SECRET? YUP, HE FINALLY GOT SO BOILED UP OVER HIS WIFE, SHE WAS BOILED UP, PERIOD? AND A 'FAT' CHANGE SHE HAD, TOO! SHE COULDN'T RUN AWAY! THE ONLY RUNNING SHE DID WAS FROM THE BAY DOWN NOT INTO JAKE'S WHALE OIL KEE? YOU MIGHT SAY MIRANDA WAS FINALLY THE LIGHT IN JAKE'S LIFE? WELL, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAGAZINES FROM THE CITY! 'BYE, NOW!"





# The Crypt Keeper



FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

# THE HAUNT OF



NO. 26  
AUGUST

10¢



10¢

# FEAR®

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

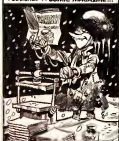


THE CRYPT-KEEPER



# ARE YOU A RED DUPE?

IN THE TOWN OF GAZDOORSKY IN THE HEART OF SOVIET RUSSIA, YOUNG MELVIN BUZUNKEN-SKOVITCHSKY PUBLISHED A COMIC MAGAZINE...



...SO THEY CAME AND SMASHED HIS FOUR-COLOR PRESS...



...AND HUNG POOR MELVIN THE NEXT MORNING!



- HERE IN AMERICA, WE CAN STILL PUBLISH COMIC MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, SUCKS, BOOKS AND THE BIBLE. WE DON'T HAVE TO SEND THEM TO A CENSOR FIRST. NOT YET...
- BUT THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE IN AMERICA WHO WOULD LIKE TO CENSOR...WHO WOULD LIKE TO SUPPRESS COMICS. IT ISN'T THAT THEY DON'T LIKE COMICS FOR THEM! THEY DON'T LIKE THEM FOR YOU!
- THESE PEOPLE SAY THAT COMIC BOOKS AREN'T AS GOOD FOR CHILDREN AS NO COMIC BOOKS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. SOME OF THESE PEOPLE ARE NO-GOODS, SOME ARE DO-GOODERS. SOME ARE WELL-MEANING, AND SOME ARE JUST PLAIN MEAN.
- BUT WE ARE CONCERNED WITH AN AMAZING REVELATION. AFTER MUCH SEARCHING OF NEWSPAPER FILES, WE'VE MADE AN ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY:

**THE GROUP MOST ANXIOUS TO DESTROY COMICS ARE THE COMMUNISTS!**

- WE'RE SERIOUS! NO KIDDIN! HERE! READ THIS:

THE [COMMUNIST] "DAILY WORKER" OF JULY 18, 1953  
BREVELY ATTACKED THE ROLE OF:

"...SO-CALLED 'COMICS' IN BRUTALIZING AMERICAN YOUTH, THE BETTER TO PREPARE THEM FOR MILITARY SERVICE IN IMPLEMENTING OUR GOVERNMENT'S AIMS OF WORLD DOMINATION, AND TO ACCEPT THE ATROCITIES NOW BEING PERPETRATED BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN IN KOREA UNDER THE FLAG OF THE UNITED NATIONS."

THIS ARTICLE ALSO QUOTED GERSHON LEGMAN (WHO CLAIMS TO BE A GHOST WRITER FOR DR. FREDERICK WERTMAN, THE AUTHOR OF A RECENT SHEAR AGAINST COMICS PUBLISHED IN "THE LADIES HOME JOURNAL"), THIS SAME G. LEGMAN, IN ISSUE # 5 OF "NEUROLOGIA" PUBLISHED IN AUTUMN 1948, WILDLY CONDEMNED COMICS, ALTHOUGH ADMITTING THAT:

"THE CHILD'S NATURAL CHARACTER...MUST BE DISTORTED TO FIT CIVILIZATION...FANTASY VIOLENCE WILL PARALYZE HIS RESISTANCE, DIVERT HIS AGGRESSION TO UNREAL ENEMIES AND FRUSTRATIONS, AND IN THIS WAY PREVENT HIM FROM REBELLING AGAINST PARENTS AND TEACHERS...THIS WILL SIPHON OFF HIS RESISTANCE AGAINST SOCIETY, AND PREVENT REVOLUTION."

- SO THE NEXT TIME SOME JOKER GETS UP AT A P.T.A. MEETING, OR STARTS JABBERING ABOUT THE "NAUGHTY COMIC BOOKS" AT YOUR LOCAL CANDY STORE, GIVE HIM THE ONCE-OVER, WE'RE NOT SAYING HE IS A COMMUNIST! HE MAY BE INNOCENT OF THE WHOLE THING! HE MAY BE A DUPE! HE MAY NOT EVEN READ THE "DAILY WORKER"! IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SWALLOWED THE RED BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER!

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# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, FIENDS. ENTER FOR THE ENTREE, SERVED UP BY YOUR CACKLING CREEPS COOK, THE OLD WITCH. THE FIRE UNDER MY PEW POT IS LIT... I POURED A LITTLE ALCOHOL ON IT!... AND I HOPE YOU'RE READY TO BEGIN MASTICATING ANOTHER MORSEL OF MY MORBID MENU. THIS REVOLTING REPAST IS A FAVORITE FOUL FARE OF MINE... A MURDEROUS MEAL TOPPED OFF WITH A DERANGED DESSERT. I CALL THIS SLIME-STORY SLOP SERVING!

## MARRIAGE VOW



"TILL DEATH DO US PART!" THOSE WORDS ARE ALWAYS RINGING IN YOUR MIND, AREN'T THEY, MARTIN SAUNDERS? THE SOLEMN WORDS OF THE WEDDING CEREMONY, NOT TO BE LIGHTLY OR CARELESSLY THROWN ASIDE. BUT LIKE ANY MARRIED MAN, YOU'D LIKE A BIT OF FREEDOM NOW AND THEN, WOULDN'T YOU? AN EVENING AWAY FROM THE HEARTH, SO YOU STEAL TO THE CLOSET, FURTIVELY SLIP INTO YOUR COAT, AND SILENTLY TIP-TOE TO THE FRONT DOOR... ONLY TO HEAR HER SHRILL VOICE...

AND JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING...?

WHY...AH...JUST OUT FOR A BREATH OF AIR, EVA...



YOU LOOK AROUND... AT THE GUST-LASHEN TABLES, THE  
OBS-WHEGGED LAMPS, THE WILDOVED FURNITURE, AND  
THEN YOU LOOK AT HER, AT EVA... AT YOUR DARLING WIFE.



YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE,  
MARTIN? YOU'RE STAYING HERE  
WITH ME... AS IT SHOULD BE!

BUT, EVA,  
I... I...

AND SO, LIKE THE PROVERBIAL, HEN-PECKED HUSBAND,  
YOU OBEY MEKKLY... TAKING OFF YOUR COAT ONCE MORE...  
HANGING IT BACK UP IN THE CLOSET... AND COMING INTO THE  
FOUL-ODORING MUSTY LIVING ROOM, TO SIT DOWN AGAIN  
THROUGH ANOTHER EVENING OF HORROR IN STONE SILENT  
RESIGNATION.



DON'T YOU LOVE MY COMPANY, MARTIN? DON'T YOU  
LOVE THESE COZY EVENINGS WE SPEND TOGETHER...  
... JUST YOU AND ME... ALONE?

YOU SIT STIFFLY, IN QUIET REVUL-  
SION, TRYING TO IGNORE HER MOCK-  
ERY. BUT YOU JUMP LIKE A FRIGHT-  
ENED RABBIT AS SHE SCREAMS...



WELL?  
UH... PEE, DEAR? I  
LOVE TO SPEND THESE  
... OH, THESE  
EVENINGS WITH YOU!

HOW YOU LIE, MARTIN! YOU KNOW  
YOU'RE FIGHTING OFF THE NAUSEA  
THAT SWEEPS OVER YOU FROM THE  
CONTEMPT AND LOATHING YOU HAVE  
FOR THIS WOMAN YOU MARRIED ONLY  
A FEW SHORT YEARS AGO. SHE NEVER  
ATTEMPTS TO 'PRETTY UP' FOR YOU.  
SHE ALWAYS LOOKS HER WORST FOR  
YOU... HER VERY WORST.



NOW TELL ME THAT YOU  
STILL LOVE ME, HONEY!  
SAY IT! SAY IT!

CAN YOU SAY IT, MARTIN? CAN YOU  
BRING YOURSELF TO MURMUR THOSE  
SWEET WORDS TO THIS DISGUSTING  
CREATURE WHOSE VERY APPEARANCE  
WOULD MAKE ANY REPTIL MAN OR  
SICK ON THE FLOOR? CAN YOU MARRY?  
OF COURSE YOU CAN! YOU MUST!



I... I... CHORE... I  
STILL LOVE FOR  
FOR... SAS

YOU HAVE TO HOWL IT OUT, DON'T YOU, MARTIN?  
AND YOU KNOW WHAT'S COMING NEXT, TOO. IT'S THE  
RITUAL. IT HAPPENS EVERY NIGHT. SHE RUNS YOUR  
NOSE IN IT AND YOU SPIRELESSLY TAKE IT...



AND IN A VISION OF  
LOVELINESS? TELL ME  
THAT! SAY IT!

YOU'RE... YOU'RE A  
VISION OF UH  
LOVELINESS, EVA?

YOU'RE A PITIFUL FIGURE, MARTIN SAUNDERS. NO DECENT,  
SELF-RESPECTING HUMAN BEING WOULD LIVE WITH THIS CREA-  
TURE FOR ONE INSTANT. YET YOU SWALLOW YOUR PRIDE AND  
STAY... DAY AFTER DAY. YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO LEAVE HER...  
RUN AWAY... FREE YOURSELF. WHY, MARTIN? WHAT HOLD DOES  
SHE HAVE ON YOU?



YOU SAY THE NICEST THINGS,  
MARTIN, DARLING NOW... KISS ME!

DOES SHE HAVE MONEY, MARTIN? DOES THAT EXPLAIN IT? A MAN WILL PUT UP WITH A LOT TO ENJOY GOLDEN LUXURY, WOULD IT BE WORTH A MILLION DOLLARS TO YOU TO KISS THOSE PUFFED LIPS WITH NO TRACE OF LIPSITOR TO HIDE THEIR SICKENING GREY SLETHINESS? FIVE MILLION?



I'M WAITING, MARTIN!

Y-YES, DEAR! SURE...

NO, MARTIN! IT ISN'T MONEY! YOU KNOW THAT! YOU'VE GOT THE MILLIONS TONIGHT... THIS MINUTE... AND CRASH! A THOUSAND MILES ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES OVER BROKEN GLASS IF YOU COULD GET AWAY FROM HER. BUT YOU CAN'T...



MMMM! THAT'S HOT, DEAR!

NO ESCAPE? TRAPPED? TILL DEATH DO US PART...

YES, MARTIN. THOSE WORDS ENSHARE YOU LIKE A STEEL VISE. YOU'RE FORCED TO SWALLOW EVERY BITTER DROP OF THIS DOMESTIC SWILL AND LIVE ON IN A KIND OF PURGATORY WITH THIS FILTHY FEMALE WHO IS YOUR WEDDED WIFE...



IF ONLY FALL THIS HADN'T HAPPENED! IF ONLY SHE WERE STILL THE SAME LONELY GIRL I FIRST MET AND...

THERE'S ONE ESCAPE, ISN'T THERE, MARTIN? YOU CAN ESCAPE INTO THE MEMORIES OF YOUR PAST, CAN'T YOU? YOU CAN RELIVE THOSE MOMENTS WHEN YOU FIRST SAW THE RICHNESS OF EVA...



YOU'RE SO FRESH AND FRESH! THAT FRESH AS DEW-DROPPED FLOWERS TREMBLING IN THE MORNING SUN!

YOU'RE SWEET, MARTIN!

YES, MARTIN. REMEMBER ENCHANTING YOURS EVA SEVEN YEARS AGO... ENCHANTING FOR BOTH HER BEAUTY AND HER WEALTH. SHE FELL FOR YOUR SMOOTH LINES, DIDN'T SHE? SHE FELL FOR YOUR HUGGY MURMURS OF LOVE... YOUR PRACTICED CHARM...



OH, DARLING, I DO LOVE YOU! I LOVE YOU MORE THAN ANYTHING ON THIS EARTH!

AND I LOVE YOU MORE THAN LIFE, OH... MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF...

REMEMBER THE WEDDING, MARTIN... AND ALL OF EVA'S RICH FRIENDS! REMEMBER THE MINISTER'S WORDS...



DO YOU, MARTIN SAUNDERS, TAKE THIS WOMAN...

THIS WOMAN AND HER MONEY?

I DO!

IT WAS YOUR DREAM COME TRUE, WASN'T IT, MARTIN? ALL OF YOUR WILDEST HOPES AND SCHEMES HAD RUNNED OUT. AFTER THE HONEYMOON, YOU SET UP HOUSEKEEPING IN EVA'S TOWN HOUSE, OFF CENTRAL PARK. AND YOU HAD SUCH PEFLEXING PROBLEMS...



MORNING, MR. SAUNDERS?

GOING FOR A RIDE, GEORGE? LET'S SEE... THE JAGUAR... OR THE CADDY? CAN'T DECIDE!

AND EVA HERSELF WASN'T SO HARD TO TAKE BACK THEN IN THE BEGINNING, WAS SHE MARTIN? SHE WAS NARM AND LOVELY... ALL WOMAN... AND EAGER TO MOVE IT TO YOU... OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

YOU LOOK FINE, DARLING! COME TO BED!

EVA... YOU ENTRANCING NITCH...



YES, MARTIN! THAT WAS EVA THEN! BUT NOW? LISTEN TO HER... NAUSEA BURSTING YOUR DREAM-BUBBLE OF THE PASSION-ATE PAST...

I SAID 'YOUR SUPPER'S READY' COME AND EAT IT! WHAT ARE YOU FREAKING ABOUT?

N-MOTHING, EVA! NOTHING



SUPPER, MARTIN! SHE CALLS THE ABOMINABLE STEW OF STALE, HALF-ROTTED MEATS SHE SERVED YOU SUPPER. WHY IT'S FOOD A PIG WOULD TURN AWAY FROM, NAUSEATED...

YOU SHAKE YOUR HEAD, FIGHTING DOWN THE GORGE THAT RISES IN YOUR THROAT. AND YOU SIT DOWN TO EAT.

SHE DOESN'T EAT WITH YOU DOES SHE, MARTIN? SHE JUST SITS THERE, OPPOSITE YOU... WATCHING. WATCHING...

MMMMMM? ARE YOU CRAZY-CHUCKING MY COOKING?

FINISH EVERY DROP, DEAR! WE MUST KEEP YOU STRONG AND HEALTHY! AND DON'T SCRABE THE MOLD FROM THE BREAD! TRY IT! IT GIVES IT TASTE!

Y-YES, EVA...



I... I'M NOT HUNGRY ANYMORE, EVA!

WHY YOU'VE SCARCELY EATEN ENOUGH TO STAY ALIVE, MARTIN! GIMME A FINISH' UP!



SO YOU GO ON, MARTIN SAUNDERS... LIVING IN A HOUSE PERMEATED WITH THE FOUL PEFID ODOR OF ROT AND DECAY. DARK AND DAMP AND UN-CLEANED FOR SO LONG...

YOU GO ON LIVING IN A HOUSE THAT EVEN A "TOBACCO ROAD FAMILY" WOULD SPURN IN DISGUST. WATCHING THE RATS SCAMPER ACROSS THE LITTER-STROWN FLOORS OF THIS ONCE LUXURIOUS MANSION...

THAT SMELL... GAGG... THAT AWFUL STENCH!



USERS



AND YOUR FRIENDS, MARTIN. EVA'S FRIENDS, THEY'VE ALL CEASED TO CALL, HAVEN'T THEY? EVA MADE SURE OF THAT. SHE'S CUT YOU OFF WITH ALL SOCIAL INTER-COURSE WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. YOUR ONCE-SEATLY BROWNSTONE HOUSE IS THE ABODE OF TWO VIRTUAL HERMITS, NOW... A CAVE IN THE HEART OF THE BIG CITY...



AND YET YOU DON'T LEAVE HER, MARTIN. WHY? WHY? IN THE MORNING, YOU'RE STILL YOUNG, HANDSOME, WARRMTH. YOU COULD EASILY FIND YOURSELF ANOTHER WOMAN... MARRY AGAIN... LIVE HAPPILY, AND YET YOU DON'T LEAVE HER. WHY?



WHY DO THOSE WORDS CHAIN YOU, MARTIN? AREN'T THEY YOUR ANSWERS? DON'T YOU SEE? THEY COULD FREE YOU. DEATH? WHY DON'T YOU KILL HER, MARTIN...



ARE YOU A COWARD, MARTIN? ARE YOU AFRAID TO TRY? NO, THAT ISN'T IT. THINK BACK... BACK TO FIVE YEARS AGO. YOU'D BEEN MARRIED A YEAR, AND EVA HAD WORN OFF. ONLY HER MONEY WAS IMPORTANT TO YOU THEN...



REMEMBER THE OLD BALCONY, MARTIN, OVERLOOKING THE TINY GARDEN BEHIND THE TOWN HOUSE? HOW EVA LOVED THAT BALCONY! SHE USED TO STAND OUT THERE FOR HOURS...



REMEMBER THE MAD PLAN YOU'D HATCHED? YOU'D THOUGHT IT OUT SO CAREFULLY. IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO WEAKEN THE SUPPORTS OF HER LITTLE BALCONY SOME TIME WHEN SHE WASN'T AT HOME...



YOU'D ENVISIONED HER STEPPING OUT ONTO THE LOOSENED BALCONY ONE NIGHT...



YOU'D EVEN SEEN IT IN YOUR MIND'S EYE SO CLEARLY... THE BOAT'S COMING LOOSE... THE Sudden SAGGING...

MARTIN! MARTIN! HELP!

THE COLLAPSING OF CONCRETE AND METAL... HER AGONIZED SHRIEK...

YAAAAEEEEEEEEEE

...AS SHE PLUMBED DOWNWARD TOWARD THE NEW BRIDGE FENCE YOU'D HAVE CONVENIENTLY ERECTED...

AND YOU'D EVEN IMAGINED YOURSELF LOOKING DOWN AT THE TWITCHING IMPAIRED FIGURE... AND LAUGHING...

GOOD-BYE, EVA... HELLO, PARIS... LONDON... NINE WOMEN... EH, EH, EH

"YOU'D PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY... EVEN UP TO WHAT YOU'D TELL THE POLICE..."

IT... IT JUST COLLAPSED! IT WAS... SOO... AWFUL... AWFUL! I WAS SO HELPLESS! I... SOO... I COULDN'T STOP IT! I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING!

AND YOU'D PICTURED HOW SYMPATHETIC THEY'D BE... NOW THEY'D PAT YOU ON THE BACK AND SAY...

SORRY, MR. SAUNDERS!  
IT'S BEEN AN ORDEAL FOR YOU, WE KNOW!

SORRY TO HAVE HAD TO ASK YOU ALL THESE PAINFUL QUESTIONS... A TRAGIC LOSS

LOSER! YOU'D BE LAUGHING INSIDE AT WHAT YOU'D GAINED! YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU EVER YOU'D HAVE TO BE CAREFUL... CONCEALING YOUR GLEE... AS THEY CARRIED HER HANGLED BODY OUT, PIECED AND TORN BY THE FENCE SPIKES

AFTER SHE'S BURIED... AND THE WILL IS PROBATED... I REAP, NOT WEED!

REMEMBER ALL THAT, MARTIN? REMEMBER THE PLANNING, ORDERING THE SPIKE FENCE... ITS CAREFUL PLANNING? REMEMBER THAT MORNING, FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN EVA WENT ON A SHOPPING TOUR AND YOU WERE FINALLY ABLE TO PUT YOUR PLANS INTO OPERATION.

"THERE' F THESE WOODEN IRON BRACES ARE READY TO COME LOOSE AT THE LEAST JARRING."

WHAT HAPPENED, MARTIN? WHAT HAPPENED FIVE YEARS AGO? EVA IS STILL WITH YOU, REVOLTING EVA RIGHT AFTER RIGHT...



MARTIN?

HON?

HER VOICE STARTLES YOU FROM YOUR REVERIE. SHE STANDS OVER YOU, SPINNING DOWN AT YOU WITH HER STAINED, TARNISHED, DECAYED TEETH, AND YOU SMELL HER FETID BREATH AS SHE WHISPERS...



IT'S TIME FOR BED, MARTIN?

NOT YET, EVA. PLEASE, NOT YET...

SHE IGNORES YOUR PLEAS. SHE TAKES YOUR HAND IN HER, HER COLD SLIMY HANDS, AND SHE LEADS YOU TO THE STAIRS. HER GRIP IS STRONG, SO STRONG...



LET ME READ A LITTLE WHILE, EVA. PLEASE? I'M NOT TIRED! REALLY?

DON'T BE STUBBORN, MARTIN! COME ALONG!

SHE PULLS YOU UP THE DUST-LADEN STAIRS—UP INTO THE FOLL RANCHO-SMELLING BEDROOM ABOVE...



I NEVER USED TO HAVE TROUBLE WITH YOU, MARTIN. NOT LONG AGO?

PLEASE, EVA... SEE...

YOU SIT ON THE BED AND YOU HIDE YOUR HEAD IN YOUR HANDS. YOU CAN'T STAND THIS, CAN YOU, MARTIN? EVERY NIGHT, THE RITUAL... YOU CAN HEAR HER RUSTLING HER DRAG-INFESTED CLOTHES...



HAVE... PITY, EVA...

BUT, DARLING? WE'RE MARRIED! REMEMBER?

YOU CAN HEAR THEM FALLING TO THE FLOOR, WHIPPING UP A BARRAGE CLOUD OF DUST... AND MUCH AS YOU TRY, YOU CANNOT HELP BUT LOOK... YOU CANNOT STOP YOURSELF FROM LOOKING AT YOUR WIFE'S BODY...



CHOKE...

THAT'S BETTER, DEAR.

YOU STARE AT HER BLOATED ROTTING FLESH THAT EVEN NOW FALLS AWAY IN TINY CRIB PARTICLES...

YOU STARE AT THE BAFINO HOLES ACROSS HER BACK WHERE THE FENCE SPIKES CAME THROUGH...



OH, LORD, THE WON'T YOU! I CAN'T, DARLING! LET ME GO!



I'M SORRY, BUT I'M SORRY! PLEASE! FOR GOD'S SAKE! GO BACK! GO BACK! PLEASE!

BUT THAT WOULD MEAN LEAVING YOU, MARTIN, DARLING! AND I CAN'T DO THAT!

AND YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN NEVER LEAVE HER, MARTIN! REMEMBER? YOU KNOW THAT IF YOU EVER TALKED, SHE WOULD FIND YOU. SHE... ON THE POLICE! BECAUSE, SHE'D GO TO THEM... AND SHOW THEM... SO YOU STARE AT THE WOMAN YOU MURDERED FIVE YEARS AGO... THE WOMAN WHO CAME BACK FROM HER GRAVE TO LIVE WITH YOU AGAIN... TO LIVE WITH YOU BECAUSE SHE'D TAKEN A VOW... A VOW SHE MEANT TO KEEP!...

TILL DEATH DO US PART, MARTIN! REMEMBER? WE BOTH PROMISED! THAT MEANS TILL BOTH OF US DIE! NOT JUST ONE! SO YOU SEE, I CAN'T LEAVE YOU! NOT YET! NOW... COME TO BED!

OH... LORD... CHORE...



HER, HER! NOW THERE'S A GAL THAT BELIEVES IN LIVING UP TO HER PROMISE, OR DEADING UP TO IT, TO BE MORE ACCURATE, SHE'S KEEPING HER MARRIAGE VOW EVEN IF SHE'S NOT KEEPING VERY WELL, HERSELF! WELL, ENOUGH OF THIS ROT! THE WARD-KEEPER ADMITS WITH HIS FRENCH PAIR, I'LL BE BACK LATER WITH ANOTHER HORROR HELPING FROM MY CROOKY GARDEN. LET ME JUST LEAVE YOU WITH THIS ONE THOUGHT. THE MOTTO OF ALL GOOD LITTLE SHOULD: "NEVER PUT OFF TILL TOMORROW WHAT YOU CAN CHOW TODAY!" "BYE, NOW!"



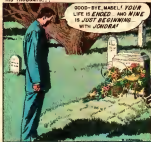


# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEY, HEY AND NOW THAT YOU'VE DINED, LET'S DANCE! WALTZ INTO THE PAULZ, CREEPS... THE VAULT OF HORROR WHERE YOUR REVELING RACONTEUR... THE VAULT-KEEPER... THAT'S ME... WILL ELECTRIFY YOU WITH A HORN-KAULDRON TOLL TALK, AND IT WON'T BE MY FAULT IF IT DOESN'T CURL YOUR HAIR! THIS HUNK OF HORROR HEAVEN'S BECALLED...

## The SHADOW KNOWS

WITH A SOFT THUD, THE LAST SHOVELFUL OF DIRT HAD BEEN FLUNG UPON THE FRESH MOUND AND PATTED DOWN, RIDING THE COFFIN AND ITS STIFF WHITE OCCUBANT FROM THE SUNLIGHT FOREVER. THE SMALL, SILENT SPOUT OF FURNACE HAD TURNED AWAY AND LEFT. THE FUNERAL WAS OVER. ONLY A MEMORY REMAINED OF WHAT HAD ONCE BEEN A LIVING BREATHING HUMAN BEING. ERIC COOPER STOOD ALONE, STARRING AT HIS WIFE'S GRAVE. HIS LONG SHADOW, THROWN BY THE SETTING SUN, WAS A GRAVEY IMAGE IN A PATHETIC POSE OF DEJECTION. HE WAS THE PERFECT PICTURE OF A GRIEF-STROCKEN HUSBAND IN A PARADYSE OF DEEP MOURNING... EXCEPT FOR HIS THOUGHTS...



ERIC STOOD THERE, NOT MOURNING AT ALL. HE GLOATED, GLOATED OVER HIS MURDEROUS SECRET...



SWEET SOUNDS SEEMED TO FILL THE TWILIGHT AIR AROUND ERIC... LIKE THE TIMELINE AND CLINKING OF COINS. THEY FORMED A BACKGROUND MUSIC AS HIS THOUGHTS RACED INTO THE PAST... A WEEK AGO... WHEN HE'D CHECKED INTO THE HOTEL, IN COVER ON HIS ROUTE AS A TRAVELING SALESMAN, AND HE'D DROPPED COINS INTO THE PAY PHONE IN THE LOBBY...



HELLO, BABY! GUESS WHO?

ERIC! DARLING! WHEN DID YOU GET MY STAY THERE? I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN AND PICK YOU UP!

JONORA'D BEEN MAD ABOUT ERIC EVER SINCE THEY FIRST MET AND HE'D TALKED BLINDLY TO HER... FEEDING HER HIS LINES... BRACING HIMSELF AGAINST HER RESISTANCE. ERIC HAD ENJOYED THE AFFAIR... PERHAPS MORE THAN THE OTHER GIRLS IN OTHER TOWNS. BUT HE'D NOT KNOWN HOW SERIOUS JONORA WAS ABOUT HIM UNTIL THAT DAY A WEEK AGO WHEN SHE'D PICKED HIM UP IN HER CADILLAC CONVERTIBLE AND DRIVEN OUT TO A QUIET SPOT AND SAID...



ERIC! WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO ASK ME TO MARRY YOU?

HON? I... UM... YOU MEAN... YOU MEAN YOU WOULD, JONORA?

OF COURSE, DARLING! I LOVE YOU! THERE'S NO ONE ELSE, IS THERE? YOU SAID YOU'RE NOT MARRIED? I COULD MAKE US BOTH HAPPY, ERIC. AFTER ALL, I AM RATHER WELL OFF!

I... UM... WELL, I NEVER DREAMED, JONORA! LET ME... LET ME THINK IT OVER!

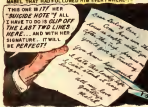


YET, HE'D TOLD JONORA HE WASN'T MARRIED! BUT HE'D LIES! AND LATER THAT DAY, IN HIS HOTEL ROOM, ERIC HAD CURSED PATE...



A MILLION DOLLARS THROWN AT ME AND I CAN'T GRAB IT? WHY DO I HAVE TO BE MARRIED? IF I WERE FREE OF MABEL, I COULD TAKE JONORA AND HER DOUGH AND LIVE ON EASY STREET. IF I WERE... FREE...

THE PLAN HAD SHAPED SWIFTLY AS HE'D SORTED THROUGH THE STEADYFLOPPING LOVING LETTERS FROM MABEL, THAT HAD FOLLOWED HIM EVERYWHERE...



THIS ONE IS IT! HER "SUICIDE NOTE"! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SLIP OFF THE LAST TWO LINES HERE... AND WITH HER SIGNATURE... IT WILL BE PERFECT!

ERIC'S HIGH-PRESSURE SALES TECHNIQUE HAD BEEN AS IRRESISTIBLE TO HIMSELF AS TO OTHERS. HE QUICKLY SOLD HIMSELF ON THE IDEA...



I CAN'T LET A FORTUNE SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS! IF MABEL WERE TO DIE FROM, SAY, SUICIDE WHILE I WAS ON THE ROAD... WHO'D PIN IT ON ME?

SO ERIC HAD SIGNED OFF THE LOVING BEGINNING OF THE LETTER, AND THE REMAINDER HAD BECOME...



THE FINING OF A NEARBY LONELY WOMAN FEELING SORRY FOR HERSELF... TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT! THE NEIGHBORS TOLD ME HOW UNHAPPY SHE IS WHEN I'M ON THE ROAD!

THE HOST HAD BEEN RELATIVELY SIMPLE! FIRST, **THE IRON GLAD ALICE**... IN THAT TOWN SO FAR AWAY...



LETTING HIMSELF INTO THE HOUSE... SILENTLY... USING HIS KEY...



STANDING HER ON THE STOOL AND SLIPPING HER NECK INTO THE MOOSE... KICKING THE STOOL AWAY...



THEN... THE CLIMB DOWN THE FIRE-ESCAPE OUTSIDE HIS WINDOW... INTO THE DESERTED ALLEY WHERE HE'D PARKED HIS CAR...



THE QUICK NERVE PUNCH THAT LEFT NO MARK... KNOCKING OUT HIS SLEEPING WIFE...



WATCHING HER COME TO IN THE LAST INSTANT BEFORE SHE'D STRANGLER TO DEATH... KICKING, STRUGGLING... HER BULGING EYES STARRING...



THE HIGH-SPEED DASH FROM DOWN TO HIS HOME TOWN... ALONG ROADS HE KNEW SO WELL... EVADING TRAFFIC... AND STATE TROOPERS...



THE HOME-MADE SCAFFOLD... THE CRACKER BAGE HANDMAID'S KNOT TIED TO THE CELLAR BEAM... AND CARRYING HIS WIFE'S UNCONSCIOUS FORM DOWN...



AND FINALLY, BEFORE THE MAD DASH BACK... THE SUICIDE NOTE PLACED CONVENIENTLY WHERE IT WOULD BE FOUND...



RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!

AND SO, AT NINE THAT MORNING, HE'D ANSWERED THE CLERK'S KNOCK...



"GOOD MORNING, MR. COOPER. THIS TELEGRAM CAME AT EIGHT. I DIDN'T WANT TO DISTURB YOU!"

"THANKS, JORDA. JOHN AND I NEEDED THAT SLEEP..."

HE'D ACTED SO WELL... AS HE'D OPENED THE MESSAGE...



"BEST SLEEP I'VE HAD IN MONTHS! I... OH, MY GOD!"

"WHAT IS IT, MR. COOPER? BAD NEWS?"

HE'D LEFT COVER IMMEDIATELY... THE GRIEF-STROKEN HUSBAND, AT THE INQUIRE, THE WIDOWS HAD ADDED THEIR EVIDENCE...



"FOUR MR. COOPER? IT WASN'T HIS FAULT HE HAD TO EARN A LIVING ON THE ROAD. BUT SHE WAS ALWAYS SO DEPRESSED WHEN HE WAS GONE! NEVER SMILED ON ANYTHING! ALWAYS FEELING SORRY FOR HIMSELF... BEIN' ALONE!"

AND, TOGETHER WITH THE SUICIDE NOTE, THE CORONER'S JURY HAD BROUGHT IN THEIR VERDICT...



"DEATH BY SUICIDE? THE BODY OF THE DECEASED TO BE TURNED OVER TO THE SURVIVING SPOUSE FOR FINAL CASE... CLOSED!"

AND NOW THE TINKLING SOUND WAS THE TINKLING OF GOLD IN DISTANT COVER... JORDANA'S GOLD... WAITING FOR HIM. ERIC COOPER'S THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PRESENT. HE TURNED AWAY FROM THE GRAVE, SMILING. IT WAS DARK NOW, THE MOON HAD RISEN, CASTING ITS GILD GLOW OVER THE SANCTUARY...



"SO NOW I'M FREE... FREE OF MAGNET... FREE OF ANY SHADOW OF SUSPICION..."

BUT ERIC WAS WRONG! FOR AS HE LEFT MABEL'S GRAVE, HE WASN'T FREE OF ANY SHADOW. THERE WAS HIS OWN... AND ONE OTHER...

SOMETHING BOTHERED ERIC AS HE CROSSED THE GRAVE-MOUND AND NEARED THE CEMETERY GATE. HE HAD A QUEEN UNEASY FEELING... AS IF... AS IF...



"SOMEBODY'S FOLLOWING ME? I CAN ALMOST TELL! ... I... GOOD LORD! WHAT'S THAT?"

HE STOOD MOTES TO THE SPOT, HIS SCALP CRAWLING...



"TWO SHADOWS? AND ONE? ONE IS THE SHADOW OF A WOMAN? IT LOOKS LIKE... NO! IT CAN'T BE! SHE'S BURIED! SHE'S DEAD! SHE'S SIX FEET UNDER! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT—NO! NO!"

HE RAN, THEN, IN WILD DREAD. HE DARED NOT LOOK BEHIND. HE TOLD HIMSELF THAT THERE COULD BE NO EXTRA SHADOW RIPPING AND DANCING ALONG WITH HIS OWN.



IT'S HEAVEN! THAT'S ALL IT IS! I'VE GOT TO GET HOME. HAVE A DRINK... CALM DOWN...

HE REACHED THE HOUSE...DASHED IN...SLAMMED THE DOOR. HE STOOD THERE IN THE DARKNESS, BREATHING HEAVILY. FINALLY, HE SWITCHED ON THE LIGHT AND FOURED HIMSELF A GOOD STIFF DRINK, THEN...



NO! NO!...LORD! HER SHADOW RAYS! IT'S MABEL'S...MABEL'S SHADOW...HAUNTING ME...HOUNDING ME FROM HER SHAW! I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE...

HE STUMBLER DUT TO HIS CAR, BEHIND HIM, THE UNDEARLY SHADOW PAUSED ON THE FRONT LAWN. HESITATING IN A POSE OF INFINITE SADNESS...AS IF POWERLESS TO LEAVE...AS IF BEHOLDING IN MEMORY OF A LOST LIFE AND LOVE...



AS THE WILES PEELLED OFF, ERIC FELT BETTER. HE SCOFFED AT HIMSELF...



I PROBABLY IMAGINED THE WHOLE THING! MY NERVES ARE ALL ON EDGE FROM THE STRAIN OF THE LAST FEW DAYS. I'VE GOT TO FORGET ABOUT MABEL...THINK OF JONGORA, AND A MILLION BUCKS!

AT DOVER, THE NEXT MORNING, WITH SUNLIGHT STREAMING INTO HIS HOTEL ROOM, ERIC HAPPILY PHONED JONGORA...



I MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY A MESS LAST NIGHT...THINKING I SAW MABEL'S SHADOW! WELL, I'M ALL RIGHT NOW AND...HELLO JONGORA, HONEY? I'M BACK! WHEN CAN I SEE YOU?

TONIGHT, DARLING! I'LL SEE OFF MOTHER'S WOMEN'S CLUB AND COME TO YOUR ROOM...AT EIGHT, AND DON'T FORGET I PROPOSED AND YOU OWE ME AN ANSWER!

BUT LIKE THE ANNOYING LOVER, JONGORA WAS EARLY FOR HER DATE THAT NIGHT, AS SHE STOPPED FROM HER CADILLAC AT THE CURB BEFORE THE HOTEL.



IT'S ONLY PAST. I'LL SURPRISE ERIC EARLY. THERE'S HIS WINDOW FIFTH FLOOR...AND HIS SHADOW, DRESSING...FOR...GASP!

JONGORA FREEZE IN JEALOUS SURPRISE AS SHE STUDIED THE SHADOW MOVING LITHELY OVER THE DRAWN SHADE OF ERIC'S ROOM...



WHY THAT'S NOT ERIC'S SHADOW! IT'S...IT'S A WOMAN'S! I...I'M EARLY AND...OH, THE DECEITFUL CHEAT! THE TWO-TIMING...SOB...SOB...

PUZZLED AT 8 O'CLOCK CAME AND WENT... THEN NINE... AND NO JONORA, ERIC THROU HER HOUSE AND SAT STUNNED BY THE FURIOUS VOICE THAT Poured FROM THE PHONE...



ERIC LOOKED AROUND... HELPLESS. THE SHADOW WAS THERE. MOCKING HIM, MABEL'S SHADOW...



AND THE NEXT MORNING, WITH THE SHADOW GONE, JONORA SWALLOWED ERIC'S STORY...



OH, ERIC DARLING! JEALOUSY TRICKED ME! I'M SORRY! KISS ME...

HE HELD HER CLOSE, FEELING HER WOMAN'S WARMTH... ONE MILLION BUCKS WORTH OF WARMTH...



ERIC HAD BEEN CAREFUL TO PUSH OFF THE WEDDING TILL MORNING. HE SENSED THAT MABEL'S SHADOW SHUNNED DAY-LIGHT. HE WANTED TO PLAY IT SAFE. BUT JONORA HAD A WOMAN AND A WOMAN IS A SUSPICIOUS CREATURE. SHE WAS CURIOUS ABOUT ERIC'S 'BUSINESS'. SO SHE PAID HIM A SURPRISE VISIT THAT EVENING.



THIS TIME, THERE WAS NO MISTAKE. SHE'D GONE UP UNANNOUNCED... AND PUSHED OPEN HIS HOTEL ROOM DOOR. AND SHE'D SEEN THE TWO SHADOWS ON THE WALL. ERIC'S AND THE WOMAN'S... EMBRACING...



JONORA FLEW FROM THE HOTEL ROOM, CRYING HYSTERICALLY. WHAT SHE'D SEEN ON THE HOTEL-ROOM WALL HAD BEEN PROOF ENOUGH FOR HER. ERIC HAD SEEN IT TOO. HE HURRIED AFTER HER. MABEL'S SHADOW FOLLOWED, TAUNTINGLY...



I DON'T WANT YOUR EXPLANATION! WE'RE THROUGH, ERIC! GOOD-BYE!

ERIC STAGGERED AFTER JONDRA'S ROARING CAR AS IT SPED INTO THE NIGHT. HE WANDERED, GAZED, UNABLE TO ELUDE THE SHADOW THAT CLUNG TO HIM... AS MABEL HAD ALWAYS CLUNG TO HIM.



JONDRA STOPPED HER CAR, SCOBING SHE SHOOK HER HEAD. HAD HER EYES DECEIVED HER BACK THERE IN THE HOTEL ROOM? WERE TWO LAMPS LIT, CASTING ERIC'S OWN DOUBLE SHADOW ON THAT WALL? WAS THIS ALL SOME JEALOUS NIGHTMARE? SHE GOT OUT OF THE CAR, STARTED RUNNING BACK TOWARD THE HOTEL. SHE NEVER NOTICED THE WOMAN'S SHADOW RIPPLING ALONG AFTER HER OWN... ITS CLUTCHING HANDS EXTENDED...



ERIC KNELT IN THE DESERTED STREET, TYING HIS LOOSENED SHOELACE. THE DISTANT STREET LAMP CAST HIS SHADOW HIGH UP ON THE WAREHOUSE WALL ACROSS THE CORNER, SUDDENLY AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM REVERBERATED THROUGH THE NIGHT.



AROUND THE CORNER, THE COP POLICEMAN HIS LONESOME BEAT LISTENED, HORRIFIED, AS THE SCREAM DIED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT IN A CHOKING GUMBLE. HE STARED AT THE SHADOWS, MAMIFIED LIKE VELVET BLACK GIANT PHANTOMS, ON THE WAREHOUSE WALL... THE SHADOW OF THE MAN BENDING OVER... AND THE SHADOW OF THE WOMAN AT HIS FEET, IN A DEATH STRUGGLE...



ERIC KNELT, FROZEN, LISTENING TO THE FADING SCREAM. AND THEN HE SAW THE SHADOWS ON THE BUILDING FACE. HIS AND MABEL'S. AND SUDDENLY HE BEGAN TO RUN... WILDT... CONFUSED... FRIGHTENED... INTO THE ARMS OF THE POLICEMAN JUST ROUNDING THE CORNER.



THE POLICEMAN NODDED TOWARD THE CRUMPLED FORM LYING UP THE BLOCK. THEY MOVED TOWARD IT... SILENTLY.



THE TRIAL WAS SHORT. ERIC'S RIDICULOUS DEFENSE ABOUT MABEL'S SHADOW WAS TORN TO PIECES. HE WAS EXECUTED SOON AFTER AND BURIED IN THE GRAVE BESIDE MABEL'S. ONLY THEN DID A WOMAN'S SHADOW TURN, AND WITH SILENT SATISFACTION, SLIP BACK INTO THE EARTH TO ITS FINAL REST.



SEE, HERE! AND THAT'S MY SHADY TALE FOR THIS ISSUE OF THE OLD MAN'S MAG. HOORAY, SO NEXT TIME YOU GET THAT CREEPY FEELING... I AM SURE YOU'RE NOT BEING SHADOWED! AND NOW, I'LL CAST YOU OUT OF THE MAGET AND BACK TO THE OLD WITCH.



## HOT HEAD

With a crowbar, Tengard began to pry the freight door loose. Grunting aloud, he felt sweat skidding down the small of his back as his arms strained to crack the metal seal on the grimy railroad car. Slowly the steel lock began to creak . . . inch by inch it opened. Another thirty seconds . . . fifteen . . . five . . .

The rasping voice coming at him from down the tracks made Tengard whirl in surprise. Past the lines of freight cars jammed into the smoky yard he saw the bulky man lunging forward: something in the beefy face and the flat-footed wobble sent a spasm of fear tremoring through Tengard.

"Wacha doin' with that lock, bum?" the rasping voice demanded as it shambled nearer. "Drop that lousy crowbar before I wrap it around your skull!"

The puffing face was close now, its beady eyes glowering out from under bushy brows. The beefy man began to snarl again, as his hand stabbed for his shoulder holster. Tengard gulped air, like a drowning man . . . then gripped the crowbar and slashed out violently.

The railroad detective went down with a scream of pain and a gush of dark red blood. Tengard's eyes popped wide and a nervous wheeze giggled from his trembling lips. He stepped forward and crashed downward with the dripping crowbar; the agonized wail stopped immediately. The enemy was dead.

Tengard heard excited voices and running feet. Glancing around wildly, he spotted an uncovered freight car. Dropping the crowbar, he fled down the tracks. Then, digging his fingers against the metal skin, he swung up the side of the car and dropped with a groan onto a jagged pile of coal.

The steps were coming closer now; the voices echoed through the yard as they searched for the dead man. Tengard shook the frightened perspiration from his eyes, knosed his fists to stop the convulsive trembling of his body, and began to burrow like a ferneied animal. The knife edges tore at his flesh and shredded his clothing; the black dust swathed his eyes and clogged his gaping mouth. But the feet were pounding by now . . . Tengard crouched and held his breath. He'd escaped!

Suddenly, the train lurched forward, lumbering ponderously as if its wheels were square. Tengard started to claw his way out of the coal pile, when the train jarrd to an unexpected stop. The coal began to shift furiously on the floor of the car, and his feet shot out from under him. With a roar, the coal began to crash out of the car, down through a rusty chute which had just opened. With a screech of terror, Tengard felt himself being sucked downwards . . . down the chute . . . down with the crashing avalanche.

It was hot . . . so searing hot that the breath was smashed from him. And bright . . . the explosion of color blinded him and he shrieked in pain. The skin began to flake off his writhing body like scales from a dead fish. His lungs puffed up until they seemed to be jamming up into the raw wound of his throat; he felt himself floating in a hideous vapor. And all around him was a thunderous roar . . . and a ghostly heat . . . a shimmering, agonizing, torturing heat . . .

All the railroad firemen found, when they cleaned the roundhouse furnace the next day, were a few puzzling slivers of charred bone.



**NOW...IF YOU JOIN...YOU GET THE BULLETIN...FREE!**

ER...YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS WAS LISTED IN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB BULLETIN. YOU...YOU GOT BACK ISSUES??



YES, FANS...YOU, TOO, CAN BE LUCKY LIKE MELVIN, HERE! YOU, TOO, CAN COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION OF E.C.'S! YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE

## **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB**

AND RECEIVE YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT (WHICH INCLUDES A FULL-COLOR 7X10% ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SNAZZY EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN)... PLUS A FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB BULLETIN!

\*\*\*\*\*  
FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, WHICH INCLUDES KIT AND FREE SUBSCRIPTION, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH \$04\* IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WANT TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ALONG WITH \$04\* FOR EACH NAME AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER. EACH MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... PLUS EACH ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN AS IT COMES OFF THE PRESS.

\*\*\*\*\*  
THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM, 704  
222 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N. Y.

So here's my \$04! So I could've joined for half the price a couple of months back! So now I got a bulletin subscription. So who says I want it. So I'm a sucker. So put me down and send me the stuff what the kid's wearing and the bulletin. I don't want but I'm paying for...

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_

SEND NO

\* (NO SHARE DONOR FOOT THE BILL FOR THE BULLETIN, UNP\*)  
(JUST WE HAD TO RAISE THE PRICE! SO OUR OWN)

\* (NO 1ST MEMBERSHIP WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER JUNE 1, 1964)

# THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Here, here! I don't know how you do it, but you do it! *Memoranda* for additions to E.C.'s Horror Hot Parade keep pouring in. Three latest suggestions were suggested by Bob Rangenberger, Chicago, Ohio; Eddie Brler, Indianapolis, Ind.; Bill Allen, Honolulu, Hawaii; Nick Andrian, Newark, N. J.; Leonard Bear, N. Y. C.; Paul Costello, Chicago, Ill.; Maurice Mancy, Lawrence, N. Y.; Paul Anderson, Ipswich Falls, S. D.; Joe Lagore, Lynn, Mass.; and Paul Gamba, North Bergen, N. J.:

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SLIT-HEART  
LIVER, COME BACK TO ME  
OH, BLIND PAPA!  
SANTA'S CRAZY  
FROM THE SPINE CAME THE CREEP  
WITH MY EYES LAYED OPEN I'M SCREAMING  
MANY SLIMES  
BREAK MY HAND (I'M A STRANGLER IN  
PARADISE)  
SEW MINE PAPA,  
WHIP THESE HANDS  
SAY, SEE BLOOD?  
GIVE ME FIVE MACOOTS MORE  
WHALING, WHALING, OVER THE BOY  
MAINED  
DOES THAT S'EMOCKING AT MY DOOR  
WHEN THE BLOOD HITS YOUR EYE  
FROM A PUTRID OLD GUY  
(THAT'S A MURDER)  
YOU SAW ME CHOKING ON AN APPLE  
L-O-L LIRA'S PAIN  
I'M SLITTING THE TOP OFF OF BAIL

And now for some PUTRID POETRY penned by Anna Zeller of N.Y.C.:

It was just a little over two years ago  
That I started reading the thing.  
As that time I thought, of course,  
It would just be a passing fling.  
"I can throw it away," I said to myself,  
"At any time I please!"  
But time went on, and I found myself  
Like a rat, attracted to cheese  
This fascination, I thought, is bound to wear out  
How long can it keep me attracted?  
But curiosity urged me on and on  
To ecstasy I reached

I was trapped like the rat attracted to cheese  
Like the addict (when without it, in pain)  
These volumes of gore are the things that please  
You see, E.C. HAS DRIVEN ME SANE!

And this gem by Frank Dupre, also of N.Y.C.:

"When I was one and twenty  
I heard a wise man say,  
'Go up and down the main drag,  
'From the alley keep away!'  
But I was one and twenty  
And grabbed on a male  
Now I am two and twenty ...  
In the stomach of a ghoul!"

Anna Laver of Baltimore, Md. is responsible for this:

She vamped her way through N. Y. State  
She vamped from Maine to New Hampshire  
And all the men used to dig her stuff  
Till they found that she was a vampiric

Jeaney Goldman of Kansas City, Mo. submits this gem:

There once was a ghoul who lived in a den  
His favorite dish was dead human skin  
He went out every night seeking some prey  
So he wouldn't be hungry the very next day.  
One night, as usual, he was out on the street,  
Waiting for someone he could nibble and eat  
When he saw a figure he thought he could rally,  
He chased the poor soul into a one exit alley  
But when he looked at the face, he began to perspire  
'Cause now he was trapped ... by a thorny vampiric

Arnold Zelenin and Allan Roemer of Denver, Mich. wind things up with:

Mary had a little lamb  
She liked it, oh so well  
She fed it a box of TNT  
And blew it straight to ... a lot of equality, putrid  
slimy poem

*Subscriptions:* One buck for eight issues ... *manila envelopes* ... *hey, hey! Keep reading in manila like the above ... makes the column easy to write!* Address for stuff:

The Old Witch  
Room 706, Dept. 36  
325 Lafayette St.  
NYC 12, N.Y.

HERE'S A SWITCH...A TERROR-  
TALE OF A LOVE THAT WAS...

# SPOILED



THEY'D BEEN MADLY IN LOVE, JANET GROVER AND LEON PAYNE. THEIR PASSION HAD BEEN WILD... BURNING... TEMPESTUOUS. THE SITUATION HAD BEEN PERFECT FOR THEM TRYET, WITH JANET'S HUSBAND SO VERY FAR AWAY. YET, NOW, SITTING UPON THE SOFA BEFORE THE OPEN FRENCH DOORS WITH THE WIND OUTSIDE MURMURING THROUGH THE TREES AND THE SOFT MOONLIGHT FILTERING DOWN INTO THE SEMI-DARKENED ROOM, THE LOVERS STARE AT EACH OTHER IN GROWING CRAWLING HORROR. THEIR HEARTS FREEZE IN SUDDEN DREAD. THEIR STOMACHS HEAVE IN SUDDEN LOATHING...

JANET? OH, LORD! WHAT'S  
HAPPENED TO US?

N-NO? DON'T TOUCH ME! OH, LEON! IT'S RUINED!  
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! OUR LOVE... OH, NO!... IMPOSSIBLE!



JANET GROVER'S FACE IS A MASK OF REVULSION AS SHE  
DRAWS AWAY, SHUDDERING, AVOIDING THE CARESSING  
HANDS AND WORDS OF ENDEARMENT SHE'D SO EAGERLY  
BOUGHT BEFORE...

HE... HE MUST HAVE **FOUND OUT** ABOUT  
MY HUSBAND! HE MUST HAVE **KNOWN**! HE  
DID THIS!



LEON PAYNE'S FACE IS TWISTED INTO AN EXPRES-  
SION OF HELPLESS FURY. HE STARES IN DISGUST AT  
THIS CREATURE BESIDE HIM...

WE... WE THOUGHT WE WERE **SAFE**! WE  
THOUGHT WE WERE PUTTING SOMETHING  
OVER ON **ABEL**. AND ALL THE TIME...  
ALL THE TIME HE... **SAAB**...



BITTER TEARS WELL UP IN JANET'S EYES... SPILLING DOWN HER CHEEKS. SHE SOARS SILENTLY OVER THIS IMPROMPTU BARRIER THAT HAS BEEN BRUTALLY PLACED BETWEEN THEM... A BARRIER SO GREAT THAT NO LOVE, NO MATTER HOW STRONG, COULD EVER CLIMB IT. SHE SHADES HER HEAD...

BUT WE WERE SO CAREFUL! SO CLEVER! WE WERE SURE HE WAS POISONED WHERE DID WE FAIL, LEON? WHERE?

I... I DON'T KNOW!



CURIOUS, KIDDEST, WONDERING WHAT ABEL GROVER COULD HAVE DONE SO EFFECTIVELY... SO DECIDEDLY TO BRING TO THIS SUDDEN END JANET'S AND LEON'S PASSIONATE ATTRACTION FOR ONE ANOTHER? HE! HE! WELL, I'LL TELL YOU! BUT FIRST... LET'S GO BACK A FEW MONTHS. LET'S LOOK IN ON JANET AND ABEL GROVER IN THOSE 'GOOD OLD DAYS' BEFORE LEON.



LET'S LOOK IN ON JANET'S PAST LIFE WITH ABEL GROVER... THE BRILLIANT SURGEON. OR RATHER, LET'S LOOK IN ON HER LIFE WITH-  
OUT HIM...

SORRY, DEAR! THAT WAS THE HOSPITAL! EMERGENCY APPENDED TOMY! I'VE GOT TO LEAVE!

OH, ABEL! THAT MEANS ANOTHER EVENING ALONE FOR ME. BEING A DOCTOR'S WIFE CAN BE SO LONELY!



WHY DON'T YOU GO OUT, DEAR? I'LL LEAVE YOU THE CAR! SEE A MOVIE OR SOMETHING.

I DON'T WANT TO SEE A MOVIE! I WANT TO BE WITH YOU!



SORRY, HON! NOTHING I CAN DO! YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO GET USED TO IT! GOOD-NIGHT! DON'T WENT UP...

O'NIGHT! YOU MEAN TALKING...



AND EVEN WHEN NO CALLS CAME FOR ABEL... EVEN WHEN HE WAS ABLE TO ENJOY ONE OF THOSE RARE EVENINGS OF FREEDOM AT HOME, JANET WOULD END UP IN A 'MEDICAL WOODHOODS'...

IF YOU WANT ME, I'LL BE IN MY LABORATORY, DEAR. CAN'T LET AN IDLE EVENING GO TO WASTE. GOT TO PUT IT TO GOOD USE WORKING ON THAT NEW ANESTHETIC OF MINE...

YES, ABEL...



THIS, JANET HAD SPENT LONG LONELY EVENINGS IN HER BIG, EMPTY HOME... ALONE... UNEXPECTED... IGNORED... GROWING MORE AND MORE DESPERATE, WHILE ABEL'S HARRIED OFF ON CALLS OR PUTTERED AROUND IN HIS CELLAR LABORATORY TILL ALL HOURS...

SOL... SOL...



AND A DESPERATE WOMAN IS CAPABLE OF DOING DESPERATE THINGS...

**FRONTAL LOBOFONY**  
TODAY! A  
**FOUR HOUR**  
**PROPOSITION**  
AT LEAST!  
WELL...GOOD-NIGHT...

CAN YOU TAKE A  
CAR TONIGHT,  
DEAR? I'D LIKE  
THE CAR! I'D  
LIKE TO GO OUT!

OF COURSE, DEAR!  
THAT'S A WONDER-  
FUL IDEA! WHY  
DON'T YOU VISIT  
ALICE...OR YOUR  
MOTHER...OR TAKE  
IN THE SNOW AT THE  
SHOUP?

I'LL DO  
SOMETHING,  
AND I DON'T  
WORRY...

AND SO IT'D BROWN. JANET HAD  
WANTED TO DO SOMETHING, ALL RIGHT.  
SHE'D WANTED TO DO SOMETHING  
ABOUT A VOID THAT HAD COME INTO  
HER LIFE... A LONGING... A DESPERA-  
TION... A HUNGER THAT NEEDED TO  
BE SATISFIED...

YES, NAME?

A...A BANGKEY  
BOUR, PLEASE!

AND SHE'D FOUND A WAY TO FILL THAT EMPTY VOID IN  
HER LONELY LIFE. SHE'D FOUND IT THAT VERY FIRST  
NIGHT IN THAT LITTLE ROADSIDE SPOT OUTSIDE OF  
TOWN. SHE'D FOUND SOMEONE ELSE AS DESPERATE  
AS SHE. **LEON**.

SHE'S **COLD**... **UNFEELING**...  
LACKING IN **PASSION**... AT  
LEAST AS FAR AS I'M CON-  
CERNED, **ANYWAY!** SO NOW  
YOU KNOW!

WE'RE BOTH  
LOOKING FOR  
SOMETHING,  
**AREN'T** WE,  
LEON? THE  
**SAME** THING!

THEY WERE LIKE TWO LOST TRAVELERS IN A LOVELESS  
DARK FROZEN WORLD, CLINGING TO EACH OTHER FOR  
WARMTH...

OH, SWEETIE, YOU'D  
BETTER **SOFT** UP, WILL  
BE **HOME** SOON!

I...I'M **CRAZY**  
FOR COMING HERE,  
JANET! THIS IS  
**INSANE!**

YES, **INSANE!** THE WHOLE MAD AFFAIR WAS **INSANE**.  
AND YET IT COULDN'T BE STOPPED. CAN YOU STOP  
AN AVALANCHE ONCE IT STARTS TO THUNDER  
WILDLY DOWN A MOUNTAINSIDE? CAN YOU STOP A  
WATERFALL FROM POURING STEAMING OVER A  
CLIFF?

LEON? COME OVER! HE'S DOWN-  
STAIRS IN HIS LABORATORY! I'VE  
**BOY** TO SEE YOU!

YOU'RE OUT  
OF YOUR  
MIND,  
JANET!

IT'S ALL **RIGHT**, MY SWEET! HE DOES  
DOWN THERE LIKE THIS FOR **HOURS**.  
I CAN **ALWAYS** TELL WHEN HE'S ABOUT  
TO **COME UP**. THE **LIGHT** GOES OFF IN  
THE LAB. YOU CAN SEE IT ON THE  
**GARDEN WALL!** COME OVER!  
IT'S **PERFECTLY** SAFE!

I...I DON'T  
**LIKE** IT!  
STILL...I  
DO WANT TO  
SEE YOU! I  
CAN'T SAY  
**NO!**

AND SO, WHILE ABEL BROVEN'S  
EXPLORED THE MYSTERIES OF  
MEDICAL SCIENCE IN HIS CELLAR  
LABORATORY...

IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO FREEZE  
THE BODY FUNCTIONS... SUSPEND  
THEM FOR A LONG PERIOD VIA  
SOME NEW ANESTHETIC... WHY,  
THE MOST DIFFICULT THE  
ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE OF SURGICAL  
OPERATIONS COULD BE PER-  
FORMED! WAS THIS FORMULA  
MAY BE THE KEY...

... JANET AND LEON HAD EXPLORED  
THE SWEETER MYSTERIES OF  
HUMAN EMOTION...

OH, DARLING...

SWEET...

THE LIGHT! IT'S  
GONE OFF! HURRY  
THROUGH THE  
GARDEN

'BYE, BABY...

IT'D BEEN SO EASY TO FOOL ABEL... UNUSUAL... ABEL... HE WAS TOO UNROMANTIC... TOO LOGICAL... TOO UNEMOTIONAL TO SUSPECT JANET OF ANY-  
THING AS BASE AND AS PRIMITIVE AS HER HAVING  
A DESIRE TO BE LOVED...

ENJOY THE TV PROGRAMS  
TONIGHT, DEAR? HOPE  
YOU WEREN'T TOO  
LONELY!

NO, ABEL. I WASN'T  
TOO LONELY  
TONIGHT!

AND YET, NOW, ON THAT VERY SAME COUCH WHERE JANET  
AND LEON HAD SO OFTEN SAT AND WATCHED THE LABORATORY  
LIGHT CAST UPON THE BANDER WALL, JANET'S PRIMITIVE  
DESIRE TO BE LOVED HAD SUDDENLY REAWAKED. SHE  
LOOKS AT LEON'S FACE AND THINKS JANET IN DISGUISE...

I DON'T TOUCH ME, LEON!  
DON'T EVEN COME NEAR  
ME. I COULDN'T BEAR  
IT!

OH, LORD! I'LL GO  
MAD... IS TAKEN AWAY  
MAD! WHEN DID HE  
FIND OUT?

WHEN DID ABEL BROVEN FIND OUT? WELL, LET'S  
SEE! IT WAS ON ONE OF THOSE NIGHTS WHEN HE  
WAS WORKING IN HIS CELLAR LABORATORY AND  
BRAZEN JANET AND LEON WERE UPSTAIRS... ON  
THE COUCH... IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS... BUT  
ALWAYS CONSCIOUS OF THE LIGHT...

IT'S GETTING  
LATE!

HE'S STILL  
DOWN THERE!

IT WAS THE NIGHT ABEL HAD JUST COMPLETED A MODERN  
SURGICAL MIRACLE USING HIS NEWLY DEVELOPED ANES-  
THETIC. HE'D RUSHED UPSTAIRS TO TELL JANET THE GOOD  
NEWS, AND HE'D FORGOTTEN TO TURN OFF HIS LAB  
LIGHT...

JANET WILL BE SO  
PROUD WHEN I...  
TELL HER...  
EH?

OH, HOLD ME,  
LEON! HOLD ME  
CLOSE!

BABY!

DR. ABEL BROWER STOOD IN THE SHADOWED DOORWAY TO THE TERRACE ROOM, AND HIS EAGER WORDS HAD CINDER INTO A SABBED SILENCE AS HE'D WATCHED THEM... HIS WIFE... HIS LOVING WIFE... AND THE OTHER MAN.



NOT NO, SON—  
NO! IT CAN'T  
BE! SHE  
COULDN'T  
DO THIS  
TO ME!

I LOVE TALKING  
T'M HEAD OVER  
HEELS IN LOVE  
WITH YOU...

HE'D HUNG BACK, NOT REVEALING HIMSELF, LISTENING TO THEIR LOVING WORDS, THEIR HEAVY BREATHING, THE SOUNDS OF THEIR PASSIONATE EMBRACE.



AND I... I THOUGHT... DARLING...  
SHE LOVED ME?  
I... CHORE.

HE'D STUMBLED BACK TO HIS BASEMENT LAB, WHIMPERING AT THE SHARP SCALPEL OF SHOCKED DISILLUSIONMENT THAT RAZORED BRUTALLY AT HIS ACHING HEART WITH NO ANESTHETIC TO SOothe THE JEALOUS PAIN.



WHAT CAN I DO? DIVORCE HER?  
FREE HER? LEAVE HER? NO? NO?  
THAT WOULD BE TOO EASY! I'VE  
GOT TO HURT HER! HURT HER AS  
SHE'S HURT ME! BUT NOW...

A CALMNESS HAD COME OVER DR. BROWER THEN, AND A KIND OF PEACE. HE'D LOOKED AT THE RESULTS OF HIS LATEST MIRACULOUS SURGERY, PERFORMED ON LABORATORY ANIMALS WITH THE AID OF HIS NEW ANESTHETIC, AND HE'D KNOWN WHAT HE HAD TO DO.



OF COURSE? EH, EH, HOW SIMPLE!

AND SO HE WAS ABLE TO FACE JANE THE NEXT DAY WITHOUT ANY SIGN OF EMOTION.



GOT TO FLY DOWN TO THE MATO  
CLINIC CONCERNING MY NEW  
ANESTHETIC, DARLING. WON'T BE  
HOME TILL TUESDAY! SORRY  
BUSINESS, YOU KNOW!

OF COURSE,  
DEAR.

HE'D SET HIS PLAN IN MOTION. NOW, ALL HE'D HAD TO DO WAS WAIT. WHEN JANE WENT OUT, HE'D RETURNED TO THE HOUSE AND HIDDEN IN HIS LABORATORY. HE'D HEARD THEM COME BACK, TOGETHER.



YOU SURE,  
HONEY?

PERFECTLY SURE! WE DON'T HAVE  
TO WATCH FOR BILLY CELLAR LIGHTS  
OR ANYTHING! HE'S FAR AWAY!  
WE DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID, NOW!

AND AS THEY'D SAT ON THE COUCH, TASTING THE FIRST SWEET TANTALIZING MOMENTS OF THEIR TRYST... HE'D COME OUT OF HIS LABORATORY, TIP-TOED SILENTLY UP BEHIND THEM... AND...



MY NEW ANESTHETIC  
FAST... SURE...  
EFFECTIVE

ROMANCE

ROMANCE

HE'D CARRIED THEM DOWN INTO THE LAB, ONE BY ONE, AND STRAPPED THEM TO OPERATING TABLES—SIDE BY SIDE.



FIRST ON ANIMALS  
NOW ON HUMANS

HE'D DONE TO WORK, HIS EXPERIENCED HANDS, LIKE DELICATE MACHINES, HAD USED THE INSTRUMENTS OF HIS TRADE SKILLFULLY, CUTTING, SLICING, SEWING.



EHEH, EH

AND WHEN IT WAS DONE, HE'D KEPT THEM UNDER THE ANESTHETIC, FEEDING THEM INTRAVENOUSLY UNTIL THE HEALING PROCESS HAD BEEN COMPLETED.



ANOTHER DAY AND  
WE'LL BE READY

AND THEN HE'D CARRIED THEM UP AGAIN, ONE BY ONE, TO THE SELF-SAME COUCH WHERE HE'D FIRST SURPRISED THEM, AND HE'D LAUGHED...

AND NOW, WHEN YOU COME TO, IT WILL BE AS THOUGH YOU WERE NEVER UNCONSCIOUS. YOU WON'T EVER KNOW THAT A REEZE HAD PASSED.



AND THEN THEY OPENED THEIR EYES, AND SMILED AT EACH OTHER, AND STRETCHED AND YAWNED AND APOLOGIZED FOR FALLING ASLEEP, AND THEN THEY'D REACHED OUT... TO BE IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS, AND THEY'D SEEN



JANET! MY GOD!

LEON!...CHUCK!

YES, THEY'D BEEN MADE IN LOVE, JANET GROVER AND LEON PAYNE. BUT NOW THAT LOVE IS GONE. JANET STARED AT LEON IN LOATHING AND DISGUST—AT HIS HEAD SEEM SO NEATLY TO WHAT HAD ONCE BEEN HER OWN BODY. AND LEON STARED AT LOVELY JANET'S FACE, AND DOWN TO HER NECK WHERE HER HEAD MEETS THE BODY THAT HAD ONCE BEEN HIS. AND IS IT ANY WONDER THEY WHISPER...

IT'S NO GOOD, LEON! IT'S RUNNED!  
NOW...HOW COULD I EVER WANT YOU?

I...KNOW, JANET...  
CHUCK...I KNOW!



HER, HER! NOW THERE'S A SWITCHER, CREEPY! THEY'VE LOST THEIR HEADS OVER EACH OTHER, THOSE TWO, AT LEAST BOB GROVER MADE SURE OF IT. WHATEVER DOCTOR GROVER THESE NIGHTS, YOU ASK! OH, HE'S AT LARGE! HE'S MAD, YOU KNOW! STAFF SAYING! GOES AROUND PAINTING MUSTACHES



ON LADIES' FACES IN SHIRAZ POSTERS, AS FOR JANET AND LEON, WELL...WHO KNOWS? AND TALKING ABOUT NOSE...I'LL SHIN OFFLINE A FAMOUS BIO-MODEL COME-LAL. "GOOD NIGHT, MRS. JO. PARDON...WHICHEVER YOU ARE!"



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

*SALUTATIONS, BLOOD! IT'S FINAL BLOP-BLOP IN THIS ICY-ISSUE OF THE OLD WITCH'S MISERY-MAGAZINE WITH LI'L OLD ME, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, WINDIN' IT UP. AFTER ALL THE DREARY DREDS YOU'VE DROOLED DOWN SO FAR, I'LL TRY TO LEAVE A GOOD TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH... GOOD AND GROSS, THAT IS! SO LET'S GO AHEAD FOR THIS TALE OF TERROR I CALL...*

## COMES THE DAWN!!

OVERHEAD, ICE-BLUE STARS SPARKLED LIKE DIAMONDS IN THE ARCTIC SKY, BEAMING DOWN OVER THE WHITE WASTELAND THAT STRETCHED AWAY FROM THE CABIN INTERMINABLY IN ALL DIRECTIONS. THE FRIGID NIGHT WIND BLEW RAW AND CHILL, BUT IT COULD NOT DISCOURAGE THE HIDEOUS THING THAT TOWLED AND SHARLED AND TRIED TO CLAW ITS WAY INTO THE CABIN. ITS HUNGER, ITS THIRST STILL UNSATED, AS IT SLAYERED AND GROVE FEROCIOUSLY TO GET INTO THE SHACK, TO SEIZE JACK BOLTON, TO DINK ITS BROODING FANGS INTO HIS WHITE THROAT, THE MAN WITHIN LAUGHED. HE LAUGHED AT THE FIENDISH INHUMAN MONSTER WHO HUNGERED FOR HIS BLOOD JUST A FEW INCHES OF WOOD AWAY.

HEH, HEH, HEH...



YES, JACK BOLTON LAUGHED. IT WAS FUNNY, IN A GROSS, GROSS WAY, TAUNTING A VAMPIRE. HE LAUGHED, TOO, AT THE TWO THINGS LYING OUT THERE IN THE COLD SNOW. THE TWO BLUE-WHITE, DIED-OUT BODIES THAT HAD BEEN DRAINED OF THEIR VITAL FLUIDS.

HEH, HEH, HEH...



JACK BOLTON PEEDED THROUGH THE CRACK IN THE CABIN WALL, GRIMACING OUT AT THE SHARLING MONSTER AND THE FREEDING COMPLEX OF HIS TWO EX-PARTNERS BEYOND. THEN HE TURNED AROUND AND UNFOLDED THE MAP.

NO THREE-WAY SPLIT, NOW! THE RICHEST UNBORN STRIKE IS ALASKA... AND IT'S ALL MINE.



HE GLANCED BACK AT THE DROOLING UGLY FACE STARRING IN AT HIM THROUGH THE CRACK.

THANKS TO YOU, MY FANDED FRIEND! IN A FEW HOURS, I'LL BE ABLE TO REACH THE PLANE... FLY TO HOME... AND STAKE MY CLAIM. AND YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP ME! BECAUSE COMES THE DAWN, YOU'LL BE GONE!



AS FOR SAM AND OLAF... WELL, I'LL TELL THE AUTHORITIES THE TRUTH. UP TO A POINT! NOW POOR GUYS, THEY WERE KILLED BY... SO HELP ME... A VAMPIRE. I CAN SHOW THEM THE BLOOD-DRAINED BODIES... AND KALAN, OUR SCIMP GUIDE, WILL BACK ME UP ABOUT THERE BEING A VAMPIRE!



EVER THE BLOSSERING AND FARTING OF THE CREATURE OUTSIDE COULD NOT DISTURB THE ROSE SLOW JACK BOLTON FELT. YES, IT HAD ALL SOME EXACTLY AS HE'D PLANNED.

THE ONLY THING I WON'T TELL THE AUTHORITIES IS THAT I PURPOSELY FIRED THE VAMPIRE... AND THAT OLAF AND SAM WERE LOOKED OUT OF THE CABIN WHEN IT CAME.



JACK LEANED BACK, ENJOYING THE DANCING FIRE, IGNORING THE SCRATCHING AND HOWLING SOUNDS BEYOND THE WINDOWLESS CABIN. HE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT MORNING, WHEN ALL THIS HAD BEGUN. THEY'D WINGED NORTH FROM HOME IN THEIR HIRED PLANE... ACROSS THE BLANK ARCTIC SNOW-DESERTS...



LET'S TRY THE AREA AROUND THE GRANITE HILLS, SAM!

ANY SPECIAL REASON, OLAF?

SAM... OLAF... AND HIM? PARTNERS! THEY'D POOLED THEIR SLIM FUNDS AND FINANCED A SAMPLE... A PROSPECTING JARBY BY AIR... OVER THE ROOF OF THE WORLD. OLAF BUNDERSEN'D HANDLED THE MAPS. HE'D ALWAYS HAD AN UNCANNY KNACK FOR SKETCHING OUT PAY-DIRT...



I GOT A HUNCH ABOUT THE CHARUK HILLS, SAM!

DEAF, OLAF, WE'LL GIVE THEM A LISTEN

SAM WAYNE'D HANDLED THE "CHARTER-BOK"... THE DIGGER COUNTER. YES, THERE WERE MODERN PROSPECTORS, USING MODERN TOOLS...

O'WON, SAM? SPEAK OFF START CLICKIN'? HEY, JACK, KEEP 'ER COM'! THIS RAGGET WON'T WORK FROM TOO FAR UP!

RIGHT, SAM!



AND HE, JACK BOLTON, HAD FLOWN THE CRATE. AND IT WAS NO BRIDGE TRYING TO KEEP A STEADY LOW ALTITUDE OVER THOSE WIND-SWEPT, BARREN WASTES.



CHANCE HILLS... DEAD AHEAD!  
HANG ON! IT'S GONNA BE A  
ROUGH RIDE

THEY'D CIRCLED THE RADIO-ACTIVE AREA, LISTENING TO THE FADING AND INCREASING CLICKS... FEELING OUT THE BOUNDARIES OF THE DEPOSIT...



IT'S NOISE!  
IT'S A  
BORING!  
WE'VE STRUCK  
IT AGAIN!

NOT FIT, OLD  
BOY? WE CAN'T  
LAND DOWN  
THERE! TOO  
ROUGH!

I SAW AN **EXTREMELY**  
RELEASE BEFORE.  
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN  
LAND **THERE** AND  
HIDE SOME **DOG BLESS**  
AND A **GUIDE**, THOSE  
THREE **'GODS PEAKS'**  
ARE A **PERFECT**  
LANDMARK...

JACK HAD SWIMMED AS LOW AS HE'D DARED OVER THE SNOW HILLS AND ICE PEAKS IN ORDER TO GIVE THE SODDER COUNTER A CHANCE TO PICK UP ANY SIGNS OF RADIO-ACTIVITY. HE'D CROSSED AND CRISS-CROSSED THE VAST, PRACTICALLY UNEXPLORED MOUNTAIN RANGE FOR ALMOST AN HOUR, WHEN...



HEY! HEY, LISTEN! SHE'S  
GOING WILD!

URANUM BOWLE!  
JACK! CIRCLE  
AROUND...

CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC

LADY LUCK HAD NOT ONLY SHELLED OUT THE JACKPOT, BUT SHE'D ALSO MADE EVERYTHING CONVENIENT FOR THEM. THE SODDER VILLAGE HAD NOT BEEN MANY MILES OFF AND A FROZEN LAKE HAD MADE A PERFECT LANDING PLACE.



DEAR KALAN! YOU GOT  
YOURSELF A DEAL, YOU  
GUIDE US TO THE THREE  
PEAKS AND WE'LL PAY  
YOUR PRICE!

I MET **DOG BLESS**  
REAR! IT **NOT LONG**  
TRIP... THREE... FOUR  
HOURS!

WHEN THEY'D REACHED THE AREA, SAM'S SODDER COUNTER HAD **REALLY** BONE WILD.



LISTEN  
TO IT!  
LISTEN!

THERE'S MORE  
SOLD IN  
FIDDER FORM  
HERE THAN  
KING MIDAS  
EVER DREAMED  
ABOUT.

GUY  
WHAT'S  
THIS?

CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC  
CLIC

AND THEN THEY'D FOUND THE CRUDE WOODEN BOX FROZEN SOLID IN THE ICE.



IT LOOKS  
LIKE A  
COFFIN!

A **COFFIN**?  
WHAT IN  
BLAZES WOULD  
A **COFFIN** BE  
GOING OUT  
HERE?

LOOKS  
REAL  
OLD!  
LET'S  
DIG  
'EM  
OUT  
AND...

...AND THEY'D HEARD KALAN'S SCREAM... AND SEEN THE LOOK IN HIS EYES.



NO! STOP! LEAVE  
IT BE! LEAVE IT  
BE! DO NOT FREE  
THE VAMPIRE!

VAMPIRE?  
ARE YOU  
KIDDING,  
KALAN?

KALAK'S SPINE-TINGLING WORDS  
HAD MISSED FROM BLOODLESS LIPS  
SET IN A FRIGHTENED FACE...

GRAND VAMPIRE? EACH SPRING  
THAT IT COMES... WHEN COFFIN  
IS FREE. MANY OF MY PEOPLE  
DIE. WE THANKFUL WHEN FREEZE  
RETURN... AND VAMPIRE IS TRAPPED  
IN ICE ONCE MORE! WE LOOK FOR  
COFFIN BUT NEVER FIND! PLEASE...  
LEAVE IT...



WELL, LOOK,  
KALAK? WE  
CAN AND YOUR  
VILLAGE OF  
THIS THING  
ONCE AND  
FOR ALL!

SURE?  
ALL WE  
HAVE TO  
DO IS  
DRIVE A  
STAKE...

NOT  
NO? MUSH!



KALAK HAD LOOKED AT THE DARK-  
ENING SKY AND MARCHED OFF SCREAM-  
ING...

HEY!

COME  
BACK,  
YOU  
IDiot!

PLAST HIM!  
WE'LL NEVER  
FIND OUR WAY  
BACK TO THE  
VILLAGE IN  
THE DARK!



BUT FATE HAD ONCE MORE BEEN KIND TO THEM, FOR,  
A FEW HUNDRED YARDS OFF, THEY'VE FOUND THE OLD  
ABANDONED TRAPPER'S CABIN.

LOOK? WHAT  
LOOK?

WE CAN STAY THERE  
TILL MORNING!



IT'S BEEN A SHEERLESS WINDLESS ONE-HOURED AFFAIR,  
OLD AND DILAPIDATED AND DRAFTY, BUT THERE'S BEEN A  
FIRE-PLACE INSIDE AND SOME WOOD, AND THEY'D BOTTEN A  
FIRE STARTED...

TOMORROW MORNING,  
WE'LL GO BACK TO THE  
VILLAGE, PUT TO WORK,  
AND STAKE OUR CLAIM.

A THREE-WAY  
SPLIT OF THIS  
FIND WILL PUT  
US ALL IN  
CLOVER!

WHAT ABOUT  
THAT MAN? WE'LL HAVE  
TO GET RID OF  
IT IF WE WANT  
THE ESKIMOS  
TO HELP US STAKE  
THE CLAIM!



BUT JACK HAD BOTTEN OTHER IDEAS ABOUT THE VAM-  
PIRE LYING IN ITS ICE-BOUND COFFIN OUT IN THE  
BATTERING DUCK...

THREE-WAY SPLIT? WHAT ABOUT A ONE-WAY  
SPLIT - ALL MINE? I COULD PUT THAT BLOOD-  
SUCKER OUT THERE TO GOOD USE. ALL I HAVE TO  
DO IS WAIT FOR SAM AND GLAY TO FALL ASLEEP.



AND SO, HOURS LATER, WITH NIGHT BLANKETING THAT  
NORTHERN ICE WORLD, JACK AND BATTERED JARFULS OF  
FIREWOOD FROM THE SUPPLY IN THE OLD CABIN AND  
STEALTHY CREEPT INTO THE NIGHT...

BOTH OF 'EM ARE SOUND ASLEEP.  
NOW'S MY CHANCE...



HE'D CARRIED THE WOOD TO THE SPOT WHERE THE ANCIENT COFFIN LAY FROZEN IN ITS ICE-SRAVE. SOON HE'D BROUGHT OUT ENOUGH TO COMPLETE A CIRCLE AROUND THE FINE CONTAINER WITH ITS TRAPPED OCCUPANT.

THERE! NOW, TO LIGHT IT!



THE DAY LOGS HAD ROARED UP INTO A HURRY FIRE THAT CAST ITS HEAT ONTO THE ICE...MELTING IT SLOWLY...FREEING THE COFFIN...

IT'S BETTER START BACK...



NEAR THE CABIN BOLTON'S PAIRED AND LOOKED BACK, WANTING TO BE SURE. HE'D SEEN THE LAST BIT OF ICE PUDDLE AWAY...HEARD THE SHARP, OBVIOUS CREAK ECHO THROUGH THE CRISP, COLD NIGHT AIR...

THE LID! IT'S OPENING! IT...CHOKE...



AND THEN HE'D SEEN THE ANCIENT TERROR OF THIS NORTHLAND IN ALL ITS MALICE RISE UP, PARAGRAPHS TO SATISFY ITS FOUL WAST SO LONG DENIED FULFILLMENT BY ITS KEY PRISON...

GOOD LORD! I...I'VE GOT TO HURRY!



HE'D RUN, STUMBLING OVER THE REMAINING DISTANCE TO THE CABIN, SCREAMING...

OLAF! SAM! OH LORDS! OLAF! SAM!



THEY'D COME FROM THE CABIN...SLEEPY-EYED, SHOOK FROM THEIR RECKLESS SLUMBER BY JACK'S SCREAMS...

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

WHAT'S WRONG, JACK?



AND, JUST AS HE'D PLANNED, WHILE OLAF AND SAM HAD STARED AT THE HORROR NOW COMING TOWARDS THEM, JACK HAD SLIPPED INTO THE CABIN AND SLID THE BOLT SHUT...

IT'S...IT'S THE VAMPIRE!

JACK! JACK, OPEN THE DOOR! FOR GOD'S SAKE! JACK...



BOLTON'S HEARD IT ALL. THOSE BLOOD-CURDLING SOUNDS WOULD BE FOREVER IMGRAINED IN HIS MEMORY. FIRST THE FEVERISH HAMMERING ON THE CARN DOOR... THE HYSTERICAL PLEADING...

JACK! PLEASE!  
JACK!

NO! NO! KEEP  
AWAY!

THEN SAM'S HORRIBLE SHRIEK OF PAIN AS THE VILE THING LEAPED UPON HIM SINKING ITS RAZOR SHARP FANGS INTO HIS NECK... AND OLAF'S CHILDISH WHIMPERS...

YAAAAEEEEEGGHHHHH

JACK...  
SOS...  
SOS  
JACK!

THE SCREAMING SUCKING SOUNDS AS THE THING FEASTED UPON SAM'S LIFE-FLUID. THE CHOKING SIGH AS OLAF'D RETCHED AND PANTED...

BOLTON'D TRIED TO STUFF THE WALL CRACKS... TO STOP THE ECHOES OF DEATH FROM REACHING HIS EARS. BUT STILL THEY'D COME! SAM'S LAST MURMLING MOAN, OLAF'S SCREAM AS HE'D COME TO. HIS SCREAM AS THE VAMPIRE'D TURNED UPON HIM...

YEAAAAAHNNHHHHHH

THEN THE SILENCE... THE AWFUL SILENCE. AND THE QUIET HEAVY BREATHING OF THE THING OUTSIDE. JACK HAD FINALLY SATIATED ENOUGH NERVE TO PEER THROUGH ONE OF THE CRACKS BETWEEN THE LOGS. AND HE'D SEEN HIS EX-PARTNERS' BODIES LYING STILL AND WHITE IN THE SNOW.

CRONE.

HE'D WATCHED IN HORROR AS THE THING HAD TURNED, SEEKING THE FURTHER PRESENCE OF BLOOD. ITS PERIOD OF ENTRAPMENT HAD BEEN LONG... ITS HUNGER GREAT. ITS TWO VICTIMS HAD ONLY *PAR*-FINALLY SATIATED ITS HUNGER. IT'S STARTED TOWARD THE CARN, CRDOLING

BOLTON'D LISTENED, SHIVERING, AS THE FANGED MEMBER OF THE LIVING DEAD HAD CLAWED AND SCRATCHED AND SCREAMED IN FRUSTRATION AT THE WEATHERBEATEN LOGS... THE STONE BARRED DOOR. FINALLY, JACK'D LAUGHED... A NERVOUS HOLLOW FRIGHTENED LAUGH...

HEH, HEH, HEH...

AND SOON, HIS LAUGH HAD BECOME A *MOOFOOD* LAUGH AS THE HOURS PASSES AND THE NIGHT GREW OLD...

FOR THIS WAS EXACTLY AS JACK HAD PLANNED IT. HE...SAFE AND SOUND IN THE SMALL LITTLE CABIN...AND THE VAMPIRE OUTSIDE...SCORCHING, CLUMMING, FEVERISHLY TRYING TO GET IN BEFORE DAWN STRUCKED THE EASTERN SKY WITH ITS COLD LIGHT...

ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, I GET RID OF IT. EITHER I GET BACK INTO IT'S COFFIN BEFORE DAWN AND I SET IT WITH A STAKE...



OR IT FALLS TO DUST AS SOON AS THE FIRST RAYS OF LIGHT HIT IT! ONE WAY OR OTHER, I WIN!



JACK LEANED BACK, IGNORING THE SCORCHING AND HOWLING SOUNDS BEYOND THE WALLS OF THE WINDOWLESS CABIN, ENJOYING THE PACING FIRE. HE GLANCED AT HIS WATCH... HIS REVERIE ENDED...

BUT IT'S ALMOST 50 A.M. AND THAT THING'S STILL OUT THERE!



BOLTON COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT. THE SUN WOULD BE COMING UP ANY MINUTE...YET THE VAMPIRE'D MADE NO MOVE TO RETURN TO ITS COFFIN. WAS IT GOING TO LET DAWN, ITS SLAYER, THAP IT AND DESTROY IT? A PAINED YELLOW SHEET OF PAPERS PINNED TO THE WALL CAUGHT JACK'S EYE...

HEHEH. THIS CALENDAR'S A FEW YEARS OLD, BUT IT'LL GIVE ME AN IDEA OF JUST WHEN THE SUN RISES AROUND THESE PARTS THIS TIME OR...OF...

OH LORD! I FORGOT! I FORGOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING...



BOLTON SCAMPERED ABOUT WILDLY...PEERING INTO THE EMPTY DUSTY CUPBOARDS, THE BARE DRAWERS...THE BARREN STORAGE COMPARTMENTS OF THE LONG-ABANDONED CABIN. AND HE SCREAMED AT NOBODY IN PARTICULAR...

IF I STAY HERE, I'LL STARVE TO DEATH! THERE ISN'T A DROP OF FOOD IN THE PLACE! AND I CAN'T MAKE IT BACK TO THE BURNING VILLAGE! THE VAMPIRE'S OUT THERE...WAITING FOR ME! WHAT CHANCE HAVE I GOT? THAT THING'S GOING TO KEEP WAITING...WAITING...BECAUSE...



BOLTON LOOKED AGAIN AT THE PAINED YELLOW CALENDAR. HE STARED AT THE BLEAMING EYES BURNING IN AT HIM THROUGH THE WALL CHINK. HE WHISPERED SOFTLY...

...BECAUSE DAWN UP HERE AT THIS LATITUDE...THIS TIME OF YEAR...DOESN'T COME FOR...ANOTHER...100...YEARS!



HEH, HEH! WELL, KIDDIES...THAT'S MY COOL TALE FOR THIS ISSUE OF THE OLD MAN'S MAG. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF YOU WERE IN JACK BOLTON'S PLACE? STAY AND STARVE...OR GO OUT AND FEED A STARVING VAMPIRE? THINK ABOUT IT FOR A FEW MINUTES. FINISHED? FEEL SICK? WELL, YOU CAN HEAVE IF YOU WANT! IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE CRYPT ANYWAY. IN FACT IT'S TIME TO CLOSE D.K.'S PUTRID PERIODICAL. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG...TALES FROM THE CRYPT. IN THE MEANTIME, A BIT OF ADVICE IF YOU HAVEN'T JOINED THE E.D. FAR-ADDICT CLUB...WELL...



...WELL...BYE!

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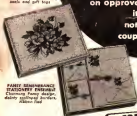
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## ABOUT FACE



THE 11TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1888 WAS ONIMOUS AND THREATENING. AS IF IT WERE SOME DREADFUL WARNING OF THINGS TO COME, THE OVERCAST SKY WAS PRESAGY WITH RAIN. UPSTAIRS IN HER BED, AMY, FORMER WHITENED AND MOANED FOR SHE, TOO, WAS READY TO BRING FORTH A STORM. HER HUSBAND, JEFF, FENCED THE PARLOR FLOOR ANXIOUSLY, FINALLY PASSING TO LIGHT THE GAS JET AND THEREBY DISPEL THE GLOOM.



HAD BEEN WAITING FOR THE SOUND, EXPECTING IT. YET WHEN IT FINALLY DID COME, JEFF STONOED...STARTLED... THEN IT CAME AGAIN...A SOFT...GENTLE BABY CRY. AND JEFF SMILED WEARILY...

IT'S...IT'S OVER. MY FIRSTBORN... MY BABY IS HERE...



HE WAITED FOR MRS. EMERSON NOW FEARING FOR ANN. THE SMILE ROLLED DOWN HIS FACE. A FEW MOMENTS LATER, THERE WAS ANOTHER...A DIFFERENT CRY...

MY GOD? WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO MY CHILD?



IT WAS A WAGGON CRY...VILE SOUNDING. JEFF THOUGHT. HE STAGGERED TO THE COUNTERHALL...CLUNG TO THE NEVEL POST...

WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?



THEN, BOTH CRIES BLENDING IN A DISCORDANT CACOPHONY. JEFF'S AIR DROPPED, AND AN UNDERSTANDING LIGHTED HIS FACE. WITH WONDERSMENT, HE WATCHED THE HAIR- FACED MONKY DESCEND THE STAIRS WEARILY...



IT'S FINISH, ISN'T IT? IT'S... WHAT'S WRONG, MRS. EMERSON? AM I? IS SHE...

YOUR WIFE IS DOING NICELY, MR. LOSTER!



THEN...THE BABIES? THE FINISH?

MOVABLE...ONCE... HORRIBLE!

JEFF FLEW UP THE STAIRS TO HIS WIFE'S BEDCH...



GIVE'S, JEFF! LOOK!

FRESH BIRTH? WHY SHE'S LOVELY! BUT THE OTHER ONE...WHERE IS SHE?



YOU'VE GOT TO PROMISE ME, JEFF... PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER TRY TO SEE HER!

BUT, AM I? SHE'S MY DAUGHTER TOO! I DON'T CARE WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE...

PROMISE, JEFF! PROMISE!



AT FIRST, JEFF LONGER TO SEE HIS OTHER CHILD WHEN AMY HAD NAMED OLGA. BUT AMY KEPT THE NURSERY DOORS LOCKED, AND JEFF SOON ACCEPTED HER WILL. PENelope, THE PRETTY ONE, JEFF PROUDLY WHEELED THROUGH THE PARK WITH AMY AT HIS SIDE...



OH, WHAT AN ADORABLE LITTLE GIRL! WHAT'S HER NAME?

PENELOPE! BUT WE'LL CALL HER PENNY! SHE'S ONE OF A SET OF TW-

JEFF!

AS THE YEARS WENT BY, JEFF LONGER ALL BUT FORGOT THERE WAS ANOTHER CHILD HIDDEN AWAY FROM THE WORLD. AMY PROTECTED HER SECRET WELL, STRANGING OLGA OUTSIDE THE ROOM PENNY SHARED WITH OLGA WHILE JEFF KISSED HIS LOVELY CHILD GOOD-NIGHT...



SHE GETS PRETTIER EVERY DAY! AMY! YOU LOOK LIKE A DOLL IN THAT BERRY AND ROSE, PENNY!

THANKS, DADDY! O'NIGHT!

GOOD-NIGHT, DEAR!

IT WAS SHORTLY AFTER PENNY AND OLGA'S FIFTEENTH BIRTHDAY THAT IT HAPPENED. PENNY, WEARING HER NEW BIRTHDAY CORSET, HAD JUST COME IN WITH HER MOTHER, AS THEY STAYED UP THE CENTRAL STAIRS...



DOOHN! MY HEART! PENNY... HSP... CALL... HSP... THE DOCTOR...

DADDY! DADDY!

WHAT'S WRONG... AMY!

PENNY HURRIED TO HER OWN ROOM, SOBING, AND JEFF WAITED OUTSIDE, PALE AND SHAKEN, WHILE DOCTOR BLUNNONS WAS WITH AMY. FINALLY, THE GOOD DOCTOR CAME OUT, LOOKED SADLY AT THE GRIEF-STROCKEN HUSBAND, AND SHOOK HIS HEAD...



I'M SORRY, JEFF! THERE'S... NOTHING I CAN DO!

AMY... SOB... MY AMY!

JEFF KNELT TEARFULLY BESIDE HIS DYING WIFE. HER VOICE WAS BARELY MORE THAN A WHISPER...



PENNY IS... OLD... BROOHN... JEFF! SHE... CAN... TAKE CARE OF HENT FOR ME... NEVER TRY TO SEE OLGA! PROMISE ME, JEFF...

I PROMISE, AMY! SOB...

AMY! AMY! AMY! NO! AMY, DON'T DIE... DON'T DIE... DON'T DIE... OIL JOB...



COME ALONG, JEFF, SHE'S IN GOD'S HANDS, NOW...

THE SKY WAS BLEAK AND OVERCAST THE DAY THEY BURIED AMY LONGER... ALMOST THE EXACT SAME KIND OF DAY SHE'D BROUGHT FORTH LIFE INTO THE WORLD. NOW HER LIFE WAS GONE... LAD TO REST...



SOB... SOB...

ACHES TO ASHER... GUST TO DIRT...

AFTER THE FUNERAL, JEFF AND HIS DAUGHTER MADE THEIR SAD, LONELY WAY HOME...



WHAT ABOUT OLGA, PENNY?

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER, DADDY!

PENNY! OLGA IS MY DAUGHTER! I MUST SEE HER! I MUST! I DON'T CARE WHAT SHE LOOKS LIKE...



PLEASE, DADDY! DON'T! IT'S BETTER THIS WAY! YOU COULD NEVER STAND HER... AND I COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE OLGA HURT!

HOW DO YOU KNOW? HOW DO YOU KNOW I COULDN'T STAND TO LOOK UPON HER...

I KNOW, DADDY! AND OLGA KNOWS!



ONE DAY, WHEN PENNY WENT OUT TO DO SOME SHOPPING, JEFF CLIMBED THE STAIRS TO HIS DAUGHTER'S ROOM. HE TRIED THE DOOR...



LOCKED! OLGA! OLGA, OPEN THE DOOR! IT'S YOUR FATHER!

NO SOUND CAME FROM THE ROOM. JEFF LISTENED TO HIS OWN HEART AND HIS OWN HEAVY BREATHING AND KNEW THAT THIS CHILD WHO'D BEEN LOCKED AWAY FOR SO LONG WAS FRIGHTENED... TOO FRIGHTENED...



DON'T BE AFRAID, OLGA! OPEN THE DOOR! I'M YOUR OWN FATHER! I... OH, PENNY!

YOU PROMISED! YOU PROMISED! BOTHER YOU'D NEVER TRY TO SEE OLGA! YOU PROMISED...

PENNY STOOD THERE ON THE STAIRS, STARING AT HER FATHER FOR A LONG MOMENT. THEN SHE BRUSHED PAST HIM AND UNLOCKED THE DOOR...



BUT I HAVE A RIGHT TO SEE HER, PENNY! I HAVE A RIGHT... AS A FATHER...

IT'S YOUR MORBID CURIOSITY, THAT'S ALL! IT IS! IT ISN'T LOVE!

PENNY SLAMMED THE DOOR AND JEFF STOOD THERE, Musing OVER HER WORDS. FROM WITHIN CAME THE SOUNDS OF MUFFLED VOICES... WHISPERS...



THEN THE DOOR OPENED. JEFF TURNED... AND SHRANK BACK IN REVULSION...



SOUND... LOUD... CHOKE...

SHE STEPPED OUT... LEAVING AT HIM, SHE WORE A BLACK CROSS THAT SHOWED GREEN WITH AGE. IT DROPPED ALL ABOUT HER FEET AND THE SLEEVES HUNG BEYOND HER FINGERTIPS. JEFF RECOGNIZED IT AS AN OLD ONE OF AUNT'S. AS WAS THE ANCIENT THREASURER BONNET THAT FRAMED HER FACE. BUT THAT FACE, THAT REPULSIVE DISTORTED HORROROUS FACE DEFIED DESCRIPTION.



YOU SMOKE... YOU ARE DEAD!

YES... I AM DEAD!

REFUSE THEY'LL HATE ME... JUST AS YOU HATE ME... FOR BEING UGLY! IT MAKES YOU HARD TO LOOK AT ME, DOESN'T IT, MY FRIEND? YES, I HATE YOU... AND ALL THE PEOPLE THAT WILL TURN THEIR HEADS AS YOU TURN YOURS. SO THEY WON'T HAVE TO SEE MY FACE!



JEFF BACKED OFF, HIS STOMACH ROLLING, THEN HE TURNED HIS BACK TO HIDE HIS OVERWHELMING DISGUST. OLGA'S WORDS HISSED AT HIM...



I HATE YOU! I HATE EVERYONE! EVERYONE BUT PENNY! SHE DOESN'T CARE IF I'M UGLY!

HOW... HOW CAN YOU... HATE A WORLD YOU'VE NEVER SEEN?

OLGA SLIPPED BACK INTO HER ROOM, AND FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS REMAINED THERE. AND IF THE VERY THOUGHT OF HER MADE JEFF'S EYES SHUT, HE AT LEAST FOUND SOLACE IN WALKING AND TALKING WITH PENNELOPE.



OLGA NEEDS LOVE... UNDERSTANDING... AFFECTION...

HOW COULD I, PENNY? HOW COULD I HATE IT TO HER?

IF SHE LOOKED LIKE ME, YOU COULD HOLD HER AND TELL HER YOU LOVE HER...

PENNELOPE! BUT IT ISN'T JUST HER FACE! THERE'S AN UGLINESS INSIDE HER, TOO. I FEEL IT...



NOT ME? SHE'S GOOD! I KNOW! SHE'S JUST AFRAID...

SHE'S BITTER AND FURIOUS AND ANGRY AT THE WORLD...



THEN SHE HAS A RIGHT TO BE. IF SHE CAN'T EXPECT ANYTHING BETTER FROM HER OWN FATHER...

I'M SORRY, PENNY! I'LL TRY I REALLY WILL...





WHEN THEY GOT BACK FROM THEIR WALK, JEFF DECIDED TO TAKE PERRY'S ADVICE...



BRING OLGA DOWN WITH YOU, DEAR.

NO, DAD! I'D RATHER YOU TALK TO HER ALONE...

PERRY WENT TO HER ROOM AND SOON AFTER, OLGA CAME DOWN DRESSED IN AMY'S OLD GOWN AND EARRY PONYTAIL. SHE STOOD AWAY FROM HER FATHER...



WELL?

I... I WONDERED IF YOU'D LIKE TO GO TO A HIKEL-DEEN WITH ME, OLGA?

OLGA'S HIDEOUS FACE BRIGHTENED.

YOU... YOU WOULDN'T BE ABANDONED TO TAKE ME?

OF... OF COURSE NOT, OLGA! COME ALONG!



BUT JEFF HAD LIES. HE WAS ASHAMED, ASHAMED OF WHAT THE NEIGHBORS MIGHT THINK... ASKED TO HAVE THEM SEE HIS DISGUSTING...LOOKING DAUGHTER...ASHAMED BECAUSE HE FELT THAT WAY. AS THEY LEFT THE HOUSE...



MR... LORNER... AND PERRY? I... GOOD LORD?

YES... THIS IS MY... MY... MY WIFE... FROM OUT OF TOWN, WILLIAMS?

OLGA TURNED ON HER FATHER, HER FACE EVEN MORE CONTORTED WITH ANGER AND HURT AND DESPAIR...



YOU DENIED IT? YOU DENIED I WAS YOUR DAUGHTER? YOU ARE ASHAMED?

HOW COULD AMY AND I HAVE PRODUCED SUCH A MONSTROSITY?

OLGA RAN, SOBING, FROM HER FATHER. JEFF WATCHED HER SCURRY UP THE STREET, WATCHED A CHILD VOMIT AT THE SIGHT OF HER... WATCHED THE MOTHER STANDING WITH HIM AT THE CURB LOOK ONCE AGAIN AT HIS HIDEOUS OFFSPRING, THEN TURN AND HIDE HERSELF...



GO ON! TEAR OUT YOUR INSIDES, YOU FILTHY THING...

JEFF TURNED AND HURRIED BACK TO THE HOUSE. OLGA WENT ON, SENDING TREMORS OF NAUSEA THROUGH ALL WHO MET HER... HER EYES SHINING WITH HATE FOR THEM. WHEN SOME CHILDREN IN THE STREET SAW HER, THEY SCREAMED AND TURNED TO RUN. OLGA TRIPPED ONE OF THEM...



YOU'LL LOOK UNLIER THAN ME WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH YOU!

SHE SPARRING AT THE PALLID CHILD, EXHAUSTEDLY CLANNING CHURNS OF RUSH FROM ITS FACE...



YAAAAHHHHHHH...

ATTRACTED BY THE CHILD'S AGONIZED SCREAMS, A PASSERBY WRENCHED THE HATE-CRAZED GIL FROM HER MOTHER...



YOU WITHOUT LITTLE FRIEND...

BUT WHEN THE MAN SAW OLGA'S PAIN, HE STAGGERED BACK WITH A SHUDDER...



GOOD LORD!

OLGA RAN HOME, THEN, AND WITH HER FACE FLUSHED WITH EXCITEMENT, SHE RECOUNTED HER VILE DEEDS TO HER SHOCKED FATHER...



MY GOD, DADDY! DIDN'T YOUR MOTHER TEACH YOU RIGHT FROM WRONG?

IT'S GOOD TO HURT PEOPLE! IT'S GOOD TO MAKE THEM SCREAM! I FORGET WHAT I LOOK LIKE...

BUT WHEN OLGA WAS IN BED THAT NIGHT, SHE WEPT BITTER TEARS OF SELF-HATRE...



IF I WAS PRETTY LIKE YOU, PENNY, THEN EVERYONE WOULDN'T HATE ME... SOB... DADDY WOULDN'T HATE ME... SOB... AND I... SOB... WOULDN'T DO NEAR TANKARD...

GET OUT OF MY EIGHT, YOU DILLY TWISTED MONSTER, GO TO YOUR ROOM!



I HOPE YOU DIE AND THEY PUT YOU UNDER DIRT IN A BOX! THEN PENNY AND I WILL BE HAPPY TOGETHER, WE'LL HAVE THIS HOUSE FOR OURSELVES...

AND PERHAPS... BEAUTIFUL PERHAPS... REPLIED GENTLY...



YOU'RE NOT DILLY TO ME, OLGA... AND I COULD NEVER HATE YOU! YOU'RE MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD! I LOVE YOU!

DOWNSTAIRS, JEFF WALLOWED IN HIS OWN SELF-PITY...



AS LONG AS OLGA IS ALIVE, PERRY AND I WILL ALWAYS BE TORTURED. SHE'S EVIL... THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT THE LITTLE MONSTER WILL DO NEXT...

HE TOOK THE REVOLVER FROM THE DRESSER...



AMY HUNDED THE SECRET OF THE TRINITY WELLS! AND THE MURDER-WIFE IS LONG DEAD. SO NO ONE KNOWS OF OLGA SAVE PERRY AND ME! PERRY... MY ONLY DAUGHTER... I'LL DO IT FOR HER...

THE LOCKED DOOR TO HIS DAUGHTER'S ROOM SHATTERED UNDER JEFF'S ASSAULT. HE STOOD THERE STARRING AT OLGA'S HORRORS REVOLTING SURPRISED FACE...



DADDY? YOU... YOU'VE GOT A GUN?

I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, OLGA...

HE RAISED THE GUN... AND HE HEARD PERRY SCREAM FROM THE DARKNESS BEYOND HIS MONSTER-CHILD...



DON'T, DADDY! DON'T!

I'VE GOT TO, PERRY... FOR YOU... AND ME...

THE SHOTS ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT. OLGA'S COMFORTED FEATURES FROZE... SHE PITCHED FORWARD... DEAD...



NOW WE'RE DEAD, PERRY? NOW WE'RE... CHOKED...

THE WORDS CUTLED IN JEFF LOVEMERE'S THROAT AS HE LOOKED DOWN AT HIS "ONLY" DAUGHTER'S... PERRY'S... BEAUTIFUL, PEACEFUL... DEAD FACE WITH THE HORROR COUNTERPART OF THE CREATURE HE'D KNOWN AS OLGA GROWING OUT OF THE BACK OF HER HEAD...



GOOD LORD!

TO WHAT'S SO PAINFUL MOST WOMEN ARE TWO-FACED! AS FOR PERRY AND OLGA... WELL... THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER THEY WERE COMING OR GOING. HEE, HEH! THAT'S MY ENTREE PORTION OF THIS

HORROR MENU, CREEPS. THE MALT-KEEPER AWAITS WITH HIS FOUL FAIR. I'LL SEE YOU LATER WITH A GRIM FAIRY TALE. IN THE MEANTIME, PLEASANT DREAMS 'BYE FOR NOW



THE END

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, DUCK INTO THE MUCK OF THE PAGES OF HORROR, NIGHTS AND... GOSH! ALMOST FORGOT MY  
THERMOS! SO, HERE... THIS IS YOUR VAULT-KEEPER, FULL OF FLEAS, WITH A GRILLER-GRILLER FOR  
ITCH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU. COME IN AND FLOP DOWN ON THAT BATED-LOADED CHAIR THERE AND I'LL  
RECITE A REVOLTING DRAM OF OLD NEW ENGLAND... AN EERIE EPISODE OF EARLY MASSACHUSETTS  
MAYHEM ENTITLED...

## GAME WASHED OUT!

JOHN TALBOT WAS UNLIKE THE OTHERS OF HIS COLONY. THEY WERE A BLEAK, COLD LOT... HIS PURITAN HEREDOS...  
WAS AS HARD LIKE THE DENSE NEW ENGLAND  
COUNTRYSIDE SURROUNDING THEIR LITTLE SETTLEMENT.  
YET WHAT MAN OF THAT COLONY WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN  
A YEAR OF HIS LIFE OR HIS OWN RIGHT ARM TO BE HOLD-  
ING BECKY AMES-CLOSE THAT NIGHT, AS JOHN WAS DOING,  
IN THE LIGHT FROM THE BURNING OF THE HEARTH  
FIRE... IN THAT SNUG LITTLE CABIN... THAT CABIN  
BELONGING TO CALVIN AMES-BECKY'S HUSBAND...



"I LOVE YOU  
BECKY!"

"OH, JOHN... JOHN...  
YOU'RE SO JOY...  
SO STRONG..."

YES, BECKY WAS DIFFERENT, TOO. SHE'D DEFIED  
STRICT LAWS TO FLIRT WITH JOHN, TO LAKE HIM ON  
TILL HIS WHOLE BEING ACHED FORHER... BUT NOT  
UNTIL THAT NIGHT HAD HIS CHANCE COME...



"I MADE IT HERE IN  
MASSACHUSETTS, BECKY.  
I UNDERSTAND THAT IN THE  
PURITAN COLONY EVERY-  
THING IS FRIENDLY, FREE.  
WE COULD GO THERE, YOU  
AND I!"

"I'D GO  
ANYWHERE  
WITH YOU,  
JOHN..."

DEEPLY ENDEARED PLACES OF PASSION IN JOHN, DEFTLY THE HANDED FURNISHMENT SHE COULD RECEIVE FOR "BOO-GITY". WHAT THEY WERE DOING AT THAT MOMENT... WHAT JOHN SO EAGERLY LONGED FOR... WAS WRONG...



**BECKY?** NO, JOHN! WE CAN'T! THERE'S NO WAY OF KNOWING WHEN CALVIN WILL BE RETURNING FROM THE MEETING HOUSE!

WHEN THEY HEARS THE SLOWING OF BOOTED FEET IN THE MUD OF THE SPRING TRAIL, BECKY PALED AND LOOKED PRACTICALLY TOWARD THE FRONT DOOR. JOHN RETREATED TO THE BACK WINDOW AND SLID IT OPEN.



HE'S COMING, JOHN! HE'S... MY HUSBAND! HOW WILL YOU GET OUT?

JUST AS I CAME IN, MY DEAREST, THROUGH THE WINDOW!

HARDLY HAD JOHN SHUT THE WINDOW FROM THE OUTSIDE THAN CALVIN AMES ENTERED THE CABIN. HAD IT BEEN DAYTIME, CALVIN WOULD HAVE EASILY SEEN JOHN, BUT IN THE DARK, JOHN COULD SAFELY WATCH WHAT ENDED... WATCH BECKY BURNINGLY PUTTER WITH THE FIRE...



**STILL AWAKE,** REBECCA? YOU REALLY SHOULD BE IN BED...

I WASN'T SLEEPY, CALVIN.

THE AMES' HOUSE WAS BUT A HUNDRED YARDS FROM JOHN'S OWN CABIN, AND HE DID NOT NOTICE THAT HIS WIFE, PRISCILLA, WAS WATCHING FROM A WINDOW SHE'D BEEN EVERYTHING...



IT WOULD TRULY BE A PARADISE WITH BECKY IN THE VIRGINIA COLONY... AND NOW THESE CONFUSED STIFFNEGGERS WOULD IN JOY GOSPELING ABOUT US AFTER WE'D GONE!



**IMBRO?** THEN PERHAPS YOU KNOW WHERE I WAS.

I DO! TOO WISE WITH THAT WICKED WOMAN... THAT ARE, AREN'T YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOU BOTH IF THE COUNCIL WERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT IT, JOHN?

PRISCILLA WAS LIKE THE REST... SO PROPER... SO COOL... THOUGH IN PRIVATE, HER TEMPER COULD FLARE. JOHN FELT HER ANGER WHEN HE OBSERVED THE DEACONESS LOOSE SHE SAID HIM AS HE ENTERED THE CABIN AND REMOVED HIS CLOAK...



WELL, AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK ME ABOUT THE MEET-ING, PRISCILLA?

WHAT COULD YOU TELL ME, JOHN? YOU WERE NOT THERE!

JOHN TURNED TO THE FIRE TO AVOID HIS WIFE'S ACCUSING EYES, YET HE STILL FELT THEM ON HIS BACK... BURNING. HE TRIED TO BE CALM, STIRRING THE SMOULDERING ASHES WITH A POKE.



THE COUNCIL WON'T FIND OUT UNLESS YOU TELL THEM, PRISCILLA!

I LOVE YOU, JOHN, TOO MUCH TO TOLERATE LETTING YOU GO TO ANOTHER WOMAN'S ARMS!

PRISCILLA'S IMPLICATION AROUSED JOHN'S ANGER. HE SPUR AROUND, FACING HER... HOLDING THE POKER THREATENINGLY... PRISCILLA NEVER FLINCHED...



YOU'VE... YOU'VE TELL THE COUNCIL ABOUT BECKY AMES AND ME?

YES, JOHN... IF I EVER SEE YOU NEAR HER AGAIN? OH, JOHN

SHE CAME TO JOHN, CLIPPING HER ANKLE AROUND HIS NECK. GLIMMERING, PLEASING... HE TURNED AHEAD ANGRILY... HIS FACE TWISTED IN DESPAIR...

IT'S NO USE, PRISCILLA! I LOVE BECKY! I'M GOING TO TAKE HER AWAY WITH ME!

NO, JOHN! NO! I WON'T LET YOU DO! I'LL NEVER LET YOU DO...



A WORD FROM PRISCILLA TO THE PURITAN COUNCIL WAS ALL THAT WOULD BE NEEDED FOR BECKY AND JOHN TO BE BURNED AT THE STAKE... OR AT BEST, HANGED. JOHN KNEW THIS... AND FLEW INTO A VIOLENT RAGE... HE PUSHED HIS WIFE FROM HIM AND STRUGGLED SAVAGELY... WITH THE POKER...



YOU'LL LET ME GO... AND YOU WON'T TELL... UNLESS EITHER...

I'LL NEVER LET YOU GO, JOHN... GRRRRRRRRRR

AGAIN AND AGAIN, JOHN BROUGHT THE POKER DOWN FEROCIOUSLY UPON HIS WIFE'S BLOODY HEAD UNTIL SHE LAY, NOT MOVING, ON THE CARRIAGE FLOOR. FOR A LONG WHILE HE STOOD OVER HER... BREATHERS HARD, THEN THE HORROR OF WHAT HE'D DONE TOOK HOLD OF HIM AND HIS ONLY THOUGHT WAS OF DISPOSING OF HER BODY. HE PUT ON HIS SLEAZER AND HAT, FORGED A COIL OF ROPE, AND LIFTED THE GLOOMY CORPSE IN HIS ARMS.



HE SLIPPED FROM THE REAR DOOR OF THE HOUSE AND INTO THE WOODS...



I'LL TAKE HER TO THE FORD IT'S DEEP... AND THEY'LL NEVER FIND HER THERE...

HE CURSED AT THE BRAMBLES THAT TORE AT HIS CLOTHES AS HE MADE HIS WAY, AND AT THE BLACKNESS OF THE NIGHT. AT LAST HE REACHED THE ROCKY LEDGE THAT HUNG OVER THE DEEPEST PART OF THE FORD...



HE USED THE WHOLE COIL OF ROPE TO BURL UP HIS WIFE'S BODY. THEN, HE ROLLED PRISCILLA OFF THE LEDGE...



...AND WATCHED HER DISAPPEAR INTO THE MURKY DEPTHS BELOW

BUT AS HE WAS ABOUT TO LEAVE, HE WAS DISMAYED TO SEE HIS WIFE'S CORPSE RISE SLOWLY BACK TO THE SURFACE...

STAY DOWN, WOMAN! I'VE SAID, CAN'T YOU DO THAT ONE LAST THING FOR ME?



ONLY SOME BUBBLES AROSE TO THE SURFACE. PRISCILLA STAYED DOWN.



TRY AS HE WOULD, JOHN WAS UNABLE TO KEEP PRISCILLA'S BODY DOWN. AT LAST HE FISHED HER OUT, FOUND A GOOSE-SIZED BOULDER, AND ROLLED IT ONTO THE SHORE EXCEPT FROM HER WRISTS, LOOKED IT AROUND HER ANKLES, AND SECURED IT TO THE BOULDER.



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, JOHN JOINED PERCY BLAIR ON TURKEY HUNT. IN THE LATE AFTERNOON, AS THEY RETURNED TO THE SETTLEMENT WITH A NUMBER OF FLUMP BIRDS, THEY NOTICED A GROUP OF THE COLORISTS Huddled OUTSIDE JOHN'S CASH.

WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE IS WRONG, JOHN?



I DON'T KNOW, PERCY! I CAN'T IMAGINE!

THEN, HE PUSHED THE BOULDER INTO THE POND, AND IT GRABBED PRISCILLA DOWN AFTER IT...



BECKY AMES AND HER HUSBAND WERE AMONG THOSE WHO GREETED JOHN SO SOLEMNLY AS HE APPROACHED...

...AND I WAS INFORMED LEST SHE BE BACK IN IN THERE, JOHN... SO I WENT IN... PRISCILLA WAS NOWHERE ABOUT! WE HAVEN'T SEEN HER ALL DAY!



BUT THAT'S AROUND? I LEFT HER TWO MORNINGS AGO AND SHE WAS PLEASED THAT I PROMISED TO GIVE HER SOME TURKEYS...

JOHN PUT ON A SPLendid SHOW OF CONCERN, RUSHING INTO THE HOUSE, THEN OUT AGAIN, WRAPPING THE SPAREST EXPRESSION HE COULD FORCE UPON HIS FACE.

SHE IS GONE! WE'LL HELP YOU HUNT FOR HER, JOHN. EVERY MAN IN THE COLONY!



THEY HEAT THROUGH THE SURROUNDING WOODS CALLING PRISCILLA'S NAME. JOHN TREMBLED AS THEY WANDERED TOWARD THE POND, BUT HE WAS IMMENSELY RELIEVED TO SEE THAT PRISCILLA'S BODY HAD STAYED DOWN...AND TO HEAR PERCY BLAIR'S KNOWING COMMENT...

SHE CAN'T HAVE DROWNED IN THERE! BODIES FLOAT, YOU KNOW...



THAT'S RIGHT! COME! LET US LOOK FURTHER!

THE SEARCH WAS FINALLY ANNOUNCED AT NIGHTFALL, AND LATER, HEINRICHES CAME TO REASSURE JOHN, THOUGH THERE WAS ALMOST AN UNBROKEN UNDERSTANDING AMONG THEM THAT MISCELLA WOULD NEVER RETURN. THE ARMS WERE THERE, TOO, AND JOHN OBSERVED THAT BECKY'S LIPS CURLED IN A SMALL SMILE...

THE DARKIES HAVE  
SURELY BOTTEN MY  
WIFE, CALVIN. ELSE WE  
WOULD HAVE FORGID  
HER...

DO NOT GIVE UP HOPE,  
JOHN!



JOHN DARED NOT BE SEEN WITH BECKY AMES, BUT HIS PLANS WERE MADE AND THEY INCLUDED HER. ONE DAY, HE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER. HE BRAWLED HIS BELONGINGS AND SLIPPED, UNOBSERVED, INTO THE ARMED CABIN...

IT WAS A TERRIBLE RISK,  
YOUR COMING HERE IN BROAD  
DAYLIGHT, JOHN!

I HAD TO, BECKY!  
COME AWAY WITH  
ME... TODAY... NOW!



"YOU'RE MAD,  
JOHN. WE'D BE  
BEEN FOLLOWED!  
IT WOULD WEAR  
THE GALLONS  
IF WE WERE  
CAUGHT..."

DON'T YOU  
LOVE ME  
ENOUGH  
TO TAKE  
THAT RISK,  
BECKY? I  
CAN'T GO ON  
LIVING HERE,  
AND I WON'T  
LEAVE WITHOUT  
YOU!



BECKY HESITATED. JOHN TOOK  
HER IN HIS ARMS, ATTEMPTING TO  
MAKE UP HER MIND WITH THE  
TOUCH OF HIS LIPS ON HER...

YOU DO LOVE  
ME, DON'T YOU,  
BECKY?

OH, I DO...  
I DO...  
OH, JOHN...



THEN SUDDENLY SHE BROKE FROM  
HIS EMBRACE, HER FACE FLUSHED  
AND RED. SHE SLAPPED HIM WITH  
ALL OF HER STRENGTH...

GET OUT OF THIS  
HOUSE, JOHN DILDOY!  
OH, THAT YOU'D CARE

BECKY...



BECKY'S BEEN FACING THE DOOR! SHE'D  
SEEN IT OPEN. SHE'D SEEN HER HUSBAND  
STANDING THERE. SHE RAN TO HIM, SUG-  
GING, BURYING HER FACE IN HIS CHEST...

HE FORGED HIS WAY IN HERE... SOB...  
CALVIN! THANK HEAVEN'S YOU  
CAME IN TIME!



HAD CALVIN COME ALONE, JOHN WOULD  
HAVE KILLED HIM AND CARRIED BECKY  
OFF, BUT THERE WERE OTHERS OUTSIDE  
AND A MOMENT LATER, THEY DRAGGED  
HIM FROM THE HOUSE...

HE FORGED HIMSELF  
ON MY WIFE!

SHE MATED  
ME, YOU  
FOOL!



CALVIN WAS BRAVE WHILE  
THE OTHERS FURIED  
JOHN'S ARMS. HE DRAG-  
GUT, CUTTING ACROSS  
JOHN'S MOUTH, SPLITTING  
HIS LIP OPEN...

HEAR NOW LIES WE'LL  
SEE IF THE COUNCIL  
BELIEVES YOUR LIES!





A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WAS CALLED AT ONCE, AND WHILE CALVIN AMES BLARTERED OUT HIS COMPLAINT AND BECKY STARED AT JOHN BRAZENLY, SEVEN GRIM COUNCILMEMBERS BEHIND THEIR LONG TABLE, GOFFING UP HIS EVERY WORD CASUALLY...



I COULD ONLY STAND THEM...  
FOO STUNNED TO SPEAK  
THIS... THIS SCOUNDREL  
WAS CRUSHING MY WIFE  
IN HIS ARMS, FORCING  
HIS LIPS AGAINST MINE.

YEA, YEA! AND  
THEN...?

AND NOW ASHAME AND STUFFED WITH FRUSTRATION AND DISAPPOINTMENT THEY WERE AT CALVIN'S MEGALOMANIAC REPLY...



WHY, HE KISSED MY  
WIFE? I CAUGHT HIM  
DOING IT! ISN'T THAT  
ENOUGH?

JAY...

KISSED...

AFTER CONFERRING IN WHISPERED HASTE WITH HIS COLLEAGUES, THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED...

JOHN TALBOT? WHAT?Y  
WE FIND YOU  
GUILTY OF  
ARTICLE ONE,  
SECTION FOUR  
OF OUR CODE...  
PUNISHABLE BY  
THREE DISMEMBERS  
ON THE STOOL.

WHAT?Y  
DOCKINGSTUFF  
HE OUGHT  
TO BE HORSE-  
WHIPPED  
TILL HIS  
FLESH HUNG  
FROM HIS  
SCHEM...



JOHN WAS SOUNDSTUNNED TO THE DUCKING STOOL. HE SEARCHED FOR BECKY'S FACE AMONG THE CROWD OF ONLOOKERS AS HE WAS PUNCHED INTO THE CHAIR...



BEAST...

SHE WAS THERE AND HER EYES TOLD HIM THAT SHE WAS SORRY... THAT SHE DID LOVE HIM... THAT SHE'D ACTED WISELY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. HE SMILED KNOWINGLY. THERE'D BE OTHER DAYS... AND BETTER OPPORTUNITIES.



RAIDE...

THE CHAIR AT THE END OF THE LONG BEAM WAS SEE-SAWED HIGH OVER THE HEADS OF THE CROWD... HIGH OVER BEAUTIFUL GERRABLE BECKY. JOHN LOOKED DOWN... DOWN AT THE RIPPLING SURFACE OF THE DUCKING POND...



RELEASE...

HE TOOK A DEEP BREATH. THEN... THE DUCKING POND BE, LONG! HE'D FORGOTTEN! HE SCREAMED AS HE HIT THE WATER...



NOT NOT STOP! IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN!  
YOU'VE GOT TO ST-STALLER...

STOP! NO MORE! PLEASE! NAME ME! ANYTHING... ANYTHING...

RELEASE!

GLASS-  
SLUGS

IT'S HE BUSTED! HE'S  
EMPTY! FALLEN  
OFF?

HE'S  
STILL  
DOWN  
THERE!

DON'T WORRY!  
WE'LL  
RIDE TO  
THE  
SURFACE!  
IT'S HAPPENED  
BEFORE.



SALE... J.G.'S NEXT CREEPY COMING TO CLOSE WITH... AS THE MEXICAN REVOLUTIONISTS SAY, "TAMBO AMERICAS!"



# EASY DOUGH

This'd be a real cooky of a job, Bootsy Dolin snickered as he turned the knob of a door lettered **FEDERAL BAKING CO., CASHIER'S OFFICE**. There was a lat payroll here waiting to be gobbled up . . . this helot job'd be as easy as eating macaroons!

Bootsy stepped into the cashier's office; the room's only occupant was an elderly woman absorbed in working at a desk. He quickly crossed the room, then tapped the desk until the old woman looked up in surprise. Bootsy leered back at her, removed a revolver from his pocket and belted it in his hand.

It went even easier than he'd anticipated. Except for a choked gasp of alarm, the old cashier followed Bootsy's script exactly. While he watched with disdain, she opened a big floor safe and removed a tray piled high with handed bills. Bootsy filled his coat and pants pockets carefully, then waved the remaining banknotes aside. Backing out of the room, his gun still seared in on the trembling old lady, he growled: "Gimme ten minutes, sister . . . then you can cackle as much as you like! Turn in an alarm before that . . ." his voice lowered to a sinister whisper . . . "and all the dough in the world won't be enough to pay your plastic surgery bill when I get finished putting your face through the grinder!"

Then he was gone, moving swiftly down the corridor toward the exit near his parked car. He hadn't gone more than ten yards when he heard the alarm clanging raucously. He gulped, turned into another corridor, tried to retrace his steps to the cashier's office . . . and realized that he had lost his way.

Whimpering with fear, he darted

into a vast room filled with clouds of flour dust and the unmistakable odor of baking. He heard the sound of feet pounding down the corridor behind him, and the muffled noise of shouting. That stupid old dame, he moaned, looking about desperately for a place to hide. Off to one side was a whole row of small doors, slightly above floor level. Probably storage cabinets, he thought, racing forward and flinging the nearest door wide. *I can duck outa sight in one of these cuhhyholes . . . until the heat dies down!* He chuckled as he squeezed into the tiny chamber and closed the door behind him. *I'm a smart cooky, he gloated. That's why I'm able to grab off this easy dough!*

In the darkness Bootsy was aware that he had stepped into a chamber rapidly filling with something soft and fluffy and yielding . . . had stepped into a wad of baking dough. Suddenly, a heavy plate began to descend from the ceiling, pressing down relentlessly on his head and shoulders. As he crouched in terror, attempting to scramble back to the door, Bootsy saw that the floor was perforated with curious holes. Some looked like stars, others resembled crescents and chlongs . . .

Bootsy screamed in agony, but it was already too late. The heavy metal ceiling was grinding down upon him, squeezing him against the grated floor . . . smashing his flesh downward and pulverizing his bones . . . thrusting his body murderously against the perforations.

As his body was torn to shreds by the awesome weight from above, Bootsy knew where he had sought refuge. He'd been trapped in a cooky press . . . but this batch was destined to become a gory blood pudding!

# THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

AND NOW FOR A LONG LOST DEPARTMENT OF MY BEYOND RESTAURANT,  
THE HAUNT OF FEAR! A CHILDISH CHILLER! A MAUSEATING NURSERY  
NOVELLETTE AN INFARTILE INSANITY CALLED!

## The Silent Treatment



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO, Huddled on a bed in a cabin high in the mountains, a king lay stiffle,  
FIDDLE, NOT DARING TO MOVE, NOT DARING FAIRLY TO BREATHE, NOT DARING TO DO ANYTHING EXCEPT WAIT, AND  
LISTEN, AND KNOW THAT IF HE HEARD IT AGAIN... THAT IF IT STARTED AGAIN, THAT MADDERING SOUND... THAT BAD  
MIND WOULD SURELY HARP AND HE'D HAVE AND WANT AND FINALLY FLING HIMSELF FROM THE CLIFF OUTSIDE DOWN  
INTO THE FINAL SILENT PEACE CALLED DEATH...



AND AS THE KING LAY THERE IN THAT QUIET CRIMINAL  
FAR-AWAYCARN... FAR FROM THE SOUNDS OF HIS  
KINGDOM... HE THOUGHT ABOUT HOW IT HAD BEEN  
BEFORE THIS... BEFORE HE'D CRAVED UTTER AND  
COMPLETE SILENCE. HE THOUGHT ABOUT THE PRINCESS  
RENEVIEWS... PRETTY LITTLE RENEVUE...

BADOFF MY CAT!  
I... I...

MORE WINE! MORE FOOD!  
COME, MUSICIANS... PLAY!  
YESTER... DANCE! AND  
FOX... FOX, LITTLE MENDY!  
COME HERE!



THE QUEEN, RENEVUE'S MOTHER, HAD DIED WITH HER  
BIRTH, BUT THE INFANT HAD NOT REPLACED THE EMPY-  
NESS THAT HAD BEEN LEFT IN THE KING'S HEART. SO  
THE KING HAD SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH SONG AND  
MERRIMENT AND A COURT OF BEAUTIFUL, LAUGHING  
WOMEN... TO HELP HIM FORGET...

THE KING IS...  
NOT BLOODED  
THIS DAY...

I'M ALREADY HOT-  
BLOODED WITH  
FOX, MORGANNA.

HA! BADOFF MY  
CAT... IT'S  
SILENT IN  
THE OFF  
HALLS...



SO GIGGLES HAD PLAYED AND JESTERS HAD  
DOVERLED AND THE LADIES OF THE COURT HAD LAUGHED  
AND CHATTERED AND WHISPERED COQUETISH THINGS  
INTO THE KING'S EAR. AND THE PALACE HAD BEEN  
FILLED WITH NOISE... THE NOISE OF GAIETY AND FUN...  
LOUD NOISE... DROWNING-OUT NOISE... SPORING OUT  
A LITTLE PRINCESS'S PLEA...

.. LAUGHT IN THE  
IVY PINE OUTSIDE  
THE TOWER WINDOW.  
DADDY! PLEASE HELP  
ME RESCUE HER, DADDY!  
DADDY MY GAY!  
DADDY...?

A HOT-BLOODED  
MAN IS A REAL  
MAN, YOUR  
MAJESTY...

YES! KAY  
ME, KAY!  
WENCH...

THE DIN OF SELF-INDULGENCE HAD ECHOED THROUGH  
THE PALACE AS THE PRINCESS GENEVIEVE HAD  
SHRUGGED AND TURNED AT HER FATHER'S BOOPFER-  
PENCE AND CLIMBED THE LONG WINDING TOWER STEPS, THE  
TEARS STREAMING FROM HER EYES...

HE... BOB... HE NEVER LISTENS... BOB...  
HE NEVER ASKED ME! HE NEVER  
HEARS ANYTHING!

THE LITTLE PRINCESS HAD MOANED TO  
THE TOWER WINDOW, DETERMINED  
TODAY SHE TRAPPED PET  
HERSELF. SHE'D REACHED OUT  
COAXING LOVING ARMS AS THE  
WHEEL OF NOISE DRIFTED UP TO  
HER...

HERE! FURRY! PLEASE FURRY!  
COME TO BE RESCUED PLEASE

BUT SHE'D LEANED OUT TOO FAR.  
SHE'D SLIPPED FROM THE TOWER  
WINDOW, CLANGING, CATCHING HER-  
SELF ON THE IVY, CLINGING THERE  
PRECARIOUSLY, HIGH ABOVE THE  
DIN. AND SHE'D SCREAMED...

DADDY! HELP ME!  
DADDY! HELP...

BUT THE KING HAD NOT HEARD HIS  
LITTLE DAUGHTER'S CRIES. HER  
CHILDISH SCREAMS HAD NOT BEEN  
ABLE TO PENETRATE THE MEGAPHONE  
AND CHATTERING NOISE THAT NEVER-  
DEPARTED THROUGH THE THRONE  
ROOM...

MORE  
HINNY!

PLAY!  
SING!

LOUDER!  
LOUDER!

AND SO, THE PRINCESS GENEVIEVE HAD HUNG THERE,  
CRYING FOR HELP, UNTIL HER TINY FINGERS HAD  
WEAKENED AND SPERM TIED AND LOST THEIR HOLD  
ON THE TWISTING VINES... AND SHE'D PLUNGED  
SCREAMING... DROPPING...

YAAAAEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

THEN, SUDDENLY, A STRANGE SILENCE HAD FALLEN UPON  
THE CASTLE AS THE ECHOES OF A PLUNGING STENOGRAPH  
HAD FAGED AWAY. THE KING HAD STOOD UP... HIS MOUTH  
GUMMING... HIS EYES WIDE...

WHAT... WHAT WAS  
THAT?

IT'S THE PRINCESS, KING!  
SHE'S FALLEN FROM THE  
TOWER WINDOW! SHE'S...  
DEAD!

THE KING HAD NOT HEARD HIS DAUGHTER'S PLEA...HER CRIES FOR HELP. THE KING HAD BEEN SURROUNDED WITH EAR-SPLITTING NOISE...AND NOW, THE NOISE...AND HIS DAUGHTER...HAD BOTH DIED AWAY...

GRIEVE...GRIEVE...GRIEVE...



AFTER THE PRINCESS'S DEATH, THE KING HAD ORDERED THE DRUMMERS DISBANDED...THE JESTERS STILLED...THE LAUGHING LADIES OF THE COURT AWAY. THE KING HAD WANTED SILENCE...NOW...A SILENCE OF MOURNING...

YOUR MAJESTY? I...SH-SH-SH...



AND SO, MONTHS HAD PASSES, THE MOURNING PERIOD HAD ENDED FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM. CHURCH BELLS HAD TOLLED AND COCKETS HAD RUMBLED AND THE PEOPLE HAD COME ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. BUT FOR THE KING, THE MOURNING PERIOD HAD NOT ENDED. IT WOULD NEVER END. EACH SOUND THAT REACHED THE KING'S EARS BROUGHT WITH IT THE ECHO OF A GIRL'S SHRIEK OF DEATH...

STOP IT! STOP THAT CLATTER!



YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

THE CONSCIENCE-STRIKEN KING HAD GROWN MORE AND MORE SENSITIVE TO NOISE AS TIME HAD GONE BY. A DREADFUL SILENCE HAD COME UPON THE PALACE. THE SERVANTS, WARY OF INCURRING THE KING'S WRATH, HAD BEEN FORCED TO MOVE ABOUT THE MARBLE HALLS IN THEIR STOCKING FEET. A NERVOUS CARE WAS TAKEN TO SEE THAT NO UNNECESSARY SOUND WAS MADE, OR ELSE...

DEAF!

BLAST YOU! SILENCE! I WANT IT QUIET!



THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM WERE NOT HAPPY THAT THEIR GLORIOUS BELL COULD NO LONGER RING OUT. BUT WHAT COULD THEY DO? THE KING HAD ORDERED SILENCE...AND THE KING WAS THE KING!

WHAT IS THAT? WHAT'S THAT HAMMERTING AND CLANGING DOWN THERE?

IT IS THE BLACKSMITHS. HE IS TEMPERING THE HORSESHOES.

ORDER HIM TO STOP! ORDER HIM TO STOP IMMEDIATELY!



BUT EVEN WITH THE DEAD STILLNESS SURROUNDING HIM IN THE PALACE, THE KING HAD NOT BEEN SATISFIED. IN THE TOWN FAR BELOW, THE TOLLING OF THE CHURCH BELL HAD GRATED UPON HIS AGITATED SENSITIVE EARS...

IT'S A WEDDING, YOUR MAJESTY! THE PEOPLE ARE REJOICING!

ORDER THE BELL SILENCED! HAVE IT REMOVED AND MELTED DOWN! I CAN'T STAND THE NOISE!



THEN THE KING CALLED HIS ROYAL PRIME MINISTER...  
ISSUE AN ORDER! THERE WILL BE NO NOISE! I WANT SILENCE, DO YOU HEAR? SILENCE! ANYONE WHO DARES OBEY HE WILL BE THROWN IN PRISON!

YES, YOUR MAJESTY!



THE BLACKSMITH HAD BEEN ORDERED TO STOP HIS NOISY HAMMERING THERE-BY FORCING HIM TO CLOSE DOWN. BUT HE'D BEEN ARRESTED WHEN HE'D TAKED UP HIS NOTICE...

MERCHANTS HAD BEEN FORCED TO ABANDON THEIR COUNTERS AS A MEANS OF CARRYING ABOUT THEIR MERCHANDISE BECAUSE OF THE RACKET THE WOODEN WHEELS MADE ON THE COBBLESTONES...

CARPENTERS WERE FORCED TO GIVE UP THE TRADE BECAUSE THEIR SAWING AND NAILING IRRITATED THEIR KING. BUILDING WAS HALTED...

BUT I ONLY...

SILENCE, IDIOT!

GET DOWN OFF THERE! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!

PLEASE! HAVE PITY...

MY ROOF LEAKED! I HAD TO...

COME WITH US! IT'S THE DUNGEON FOR YOU!

FINALLY, THE SOUND-SENSITIVE KING HAD LOOKED OUT OVER HIS SILENT KINGDOM FROM HIS SILENT PALACE AND NODDED IN BELIEVED APPROVAL. NOW ALL WAS QUIET. NOW ALL WAS STILL. AND THEN HE'D HEARD THE MURMUR...LIKE MICE IN WALLS...THE CHATTERING...THE DISTANT SOUNDS OF VOICES...

TALKING WAS OUTLAWED. THE PEOPLE HAD TAKEN TO WHISPERING. ANYONE WHO'D ACCIDENTLY TALKED IN A NORMAL VOICE HAD IMMEDIATELY CARTED OFF AND HIS TONGUE CUT OUT. THE KING'D LOOKED OUT OVER HIS SILENT KINGDOM FROM HIS SILENT PALACE AND HE'D NODDED. AND THEN HE'D HEARD THE HISSING...THE GIBBLANT MUMMUR...LIKE WIND-BLOWN LEAVES...

ORDER THEM TO STOP TALKING!

YES, YOUR HIGHNESS.

ORDER THEM TO STOP WHISPERING!

YES, SIR.

AND SO, ALL WHISPERING HAD BEEN BANISHED FROM THE KINGDOM. THE PEOPLE HAD TAKEN TO WRITING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THEMSELVES. EVERYONE CARRIED IMPLEMENTS WITH THEM, AND THE KING'D LOOKED OUT AND HE'D HEARD THE SCRATCHING AND...SCRAPING...THE RUBBING OF CHALK ON SLATE...LIKE GARDEN RAIN...

NOW THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM COULD DO NOTHING BUT SIT AND STARE AT EACH OTHER. AND THE KING'D LOOKED OUT OVER HIS SILENT KINGDOM, AND HE'D HEARD THE FAINT SIGNS...THE SINKING IN AND EXPOLLING OUT OF AIR FROM THEIR LUNGS...LIKE SPRING BREEZES...

ORDER THEM TO STOP WRITING!

YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

ORDER THEM TO STOP BREATHING!

BUT YOUR MAJESTY...

THE KING HAD RAGED AND RANTED...  
INSISTING UPON THE ORDER...

BUT, YOUR  
MAJESTY!  
IF THE PEOPLE  
CANNOT BREATHE,  
THEY WILL DIE!

THEN  
LET  
THEM  
DIE! I  
WANT  
SILENCE!

...AND OVER THE SILENT SILENT  
KINGDOM, HIS VOICE HAD CARRIED  
LIKE AN ECHO...

DID YOU  
HEAR?

THE FOOL  
HAD DONE  
FAR ENOUGH!

THE PRIME-MINISTER HAD SHUFFLED  
OFF ON PADDED FEET AND THE  
KING HAD STOOD IN THE SILENCE  
AND LISTENED, WAITING FOR THE  
GOLDS OF THE BREATHING THAT  
DRIFTED UP TO HIM FROM THE KING-  
DOM BELOW TO STOP. BUT INSTEAD,  
HE'D HEARD A STIRRING...

THEY'RE TALKING! THEY'RE  
WHISPERING AGAIN!

AND THE STIRRING HAD BECOME A MURMUR... AND THE  
MURMUR A HUMMING... AND THE HUMMING A ROAR... AND  
THE ROAR HAD THUNDERED UP THE MOUNTAIN TOWARD  
THE PALACE...

SILENCE! SILENCE, YOU FOOLS!  
GO BACK! GO BACK AND  
KEEP QUIET!

THE THUNDER HAD BEEN SO LOUD, IT BROWNE OUT THE  
SPEECH OF THE KING. THE THUNDER HAD BEEN A THOU-  
SAND ANGRY VOICES... A THOUSAND PAIRS OF ANGRY  
FEET... THE CARPENTERS... THE BLACKSMITHS... THE  
MERCHANTS... AND LEADING THEM, A CRAFTSMAN  
NAMED MASON HIGGINS. MASON HIGGINS HAD CLUTCHED  
A SWORD, BUT IN HIS HAND...

SHUT THE MOUTH!

LOWER THE DIAMONDS!

THE THUNDERING PEOPLE HAD STORMED THE PALACE  
AND OVERPOWERED THE GUARDS AND STAMPEDED  
THROUGH THE MARBLE HALLS AND FOUND THE KING...

HERE HE  
IS!

GET  
HIM!

HIGGINS! THE  
BOY!

OH,  
LORD!  
THE  
NOISE!

THE KING HAD BEEN FORCED TO THE FLOOR AND THE  
PEOPLE HAD DONE THINGS TO HIM... WITH KNIVES  
AND BAYONETS AND THREDS AND MASON HIGGINS'S LITTLE  
POE...





So, ONCE UPON A TIME, A KING LAY STIFFLY, RIGIDLY, ON A BED IN A CAVE IN HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS WHERE HIS PEOPLE HAD CHILLED HIM. HE LAY, NOT DARING TO MOVE... NOT DARING TO BREATHE... NOT DARING TO DO ANYTHING BUT WAIT, AND LISTEN, AND KNOW THAT IF HE'D HEAR THAT SOUND AGAIN... JUST ONCE... HE'D GO OUT OF HIS MIND...



IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN AS LONG AS HE LAY STILL. IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN AS LONG AS HE WOULDN'T MOVE. THE KING KNEW THAT. HE'D SUFFERED HOURS OF TORTURE TIME AND TIME AGAIN DURING HIS BRUTAL DEATH. HE'D COME UP UNDER THE MADDENING SOUND UNTIL IT'D STOPPED... AND HE'D FOUND OUT? HE'D FOUND OUT THAT IF HE MOVED, IT WOULD START AGAIN...



So HE LAY STIFFLY... LIKE STONE... LIKE SILENT STONE... AND HE WATCHED THE SPIDER... THE SILENT SPIDER ON THE CEILING... SPINNING ITS SILENT WEB...



AND HE WATCHED THE WEB LENGTHEN AND THE SPIDER DROP, INCH BY INCH, LOWER AND LOWER, UNTIL IT HUNG JUST ABOVE HIS FACE... AND STILL HE DID NOT MOVE...



HE JUST PRAYED. HE PRAYED THAT THE SPIDER IN THE SILENT, SILENT CAVE WOULD SILENTLY CLIMB UP ITS SILENT SILKEN THREAD, INSTEAD OF... INSTEAD OF... *OH, LORD!* THE SPIDER WAS COMING CLOSER... CLOSER... CLOSER TO THE KING'S FACE...



AND THEN IT TOUCHED HIM AND HE SHOOKERED AND SCREAMED AND SWORE AT THE SPIDER AND THE SILENCE WAS DESTROYED. THAT SOUND? THAT MADDENING SOUND BEGAN AGAIN? THE SILENT MADDENING TICK-TOCK... TICK-TOCK... TICK-TOCK... THE SOUND THAT WAS DRIVING HIM OUT OF HIS MIND...



...THE SOUND COMING FROM THE SPECIAL METRONOME TIME-PIECE MASON HIGGINS HAD LICKED OVER, EVER SO GENTLY, AFTER THEY'D MADE HIM CLOSE HIS SHOP AND STOP DISCLOSED... THE METRONOME TIME-PIECE THAT WOUND UP AUTOMATICALLY AT THE SLIGHTEST SLIGHTEST MOVEMENT AND TOOK HOURS TO RUN DOWN...



THE METRONOME TIME-PIECE THEY'D BUILT INSIDE THE KING BEFORE THEY'D COME BACK TO THEIR NORMAL MORTAL POSTURES, LIVING HAPPILY EVER AFTER... WHILE THE KING WENT OFF THE DEEP END... OFF THE CLIFF!

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HELLO! AND NOW THAT THOSE OTHER TWO GHOULNATICS HAVE CONVOYED YOUR BLOOD, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO CHURN IT WITH ANOTHER LOATHSOME LARD LITERARY PIECE FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR. YEP, IT'S YOUR CHAIRMAN OF CHEERFUL CHILLS...YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER...READY TO READ ANOTHER REVOLTING RIFT. THIS TIME, TERROR-TALE IS TOLD BY AN OLD SHAG, IT'S SORT OF A HOUSE DICK-TATION. SO HERE GOES WITH:

## SWAMPED

TO ANY STRANGER FOOLHARDY AND CARELESS ENOUGH TO WANDER THIS DEEP INTO THE FOREWOODS AND TREACHEROUS DRENCHED SWAMP, I WOULD APPEAR AS NOTHING MORE THAN A WEATHERBEATEN ROT-TING OLD ABANDONED SHACK, STANDING ANGUISH AND LONELY IN THE DARK DIM DAYLIGHT BENEATH MOSS-HUNG CYPRESS TREES IN THE CENTER OF THIS SHIMMERING MUD-CLEANING...



BUT I AM FAR FROM INERT! FOR WITHIN MY WORN-INFESTED WALLS...WHERE SPIDERS JOIN THEIR SLICKY WIDS AND WAIT FOR UNSUSPECTING VICTIMS TO TRAP THEMSELVES...WHERE RATS AND CRAWLING THINGS SCURRY OVER WILD-WED CRACKING FLOOR-BOARDS... I NESTLE A HORRENDOUS CREATURE TO MY FINE BOSH...



...A CREATURE IN HUMAN FORM, AND YET OF SUCH **UNDESIRABLE REVELATION AND LOATHSOME-NESS** THAT EVEN THE **FLIES** AVOID HIM AND THE EVER-THIRSTY **SWAMP MOSQUITOES** REFUSE TO LIGHT UPON HIS SICKENING FLESH AND SUCK UPON HIS CONTAMINATED BLOOD.



...GASSES MY ALREADY-BRENNED FLOOR PLANKS WITH GRASSING FEET, HEAVY WITH **WEARINESS** AND **SAPPED STRENGTH**.



...AND STEPS OUT INTO THE THICK, HOT, WET **SWAMP NIGHT**, TEARFUL, TORTURED, PRAYING THAT **TWO TIME, THIS TIME HIS NUMBER WILL BE GATED**.



...A **JOAN-FATHER** WHO WITS STAY IN A STUPOR RESEMBLING DEATH, WHO SITS AND STANCES AND OCCASIONALLY MUMBLES AND LAUGHS HASTILY AND LINGS HIS FESTERING LIPS.



MY CRUDE PORCH WINDS UNDER HIS WEIGHT AS HE SHUFFLES TO THE **LADDER**, BAGED DOWN.



...A **HERBERT** WHO, WHEN SUCH COMES UPON THE OXFORDSHIRE, WHEN THE COTTONMOUTH CUMES IN ITS STAIRWAY POOL, AND THE ALLIGATOR INCHES UP ONTO ITS SLIMY BANK AND THE SWAMP BIRDS FALL INTO HIDING SILENCE, **AGES** FROM HIS STUPOR WITH A **GRATULATORY**.



...DOWN TO THE FLAT-BOTTOMED BOAT LASHED TO ONE OF MY MOSSY-BLICK SUPPORTING STILTS, TO THE **BOAT RESTING ON THE GLIMMERING MUD**...



THEN, **IDENTICALLY** AS IT MAY APPEAR, MY **HERM-CHANCE**, MY HORROROUS SECRET, BEING TO **ROW**, HE **ROWS ACROSS THE GLIMMERING AND CLEARING**, PUSHING BACK GREAT SOBS OF GLITTERING WET SAND, **ROWING HIS BOAT TOWARD THE GRASSY BANK BEYOND**...



CAREFULLY HE TIES THE BOAT TO AN OVERHANGING LIMB AND SLIDES ONTO THE GRAY MOUND. HE TURNS BACK TO **GRIN** AT ME AS I **STAND LONELY AND POLENTED AND ASHAMED**, THEN DUCKS OFF INTO THE DARK MYSTERIOUS DEEPWOODS SWAMP.



THIS IS THE WAY IT *ALL* EACH NIGHT. THIS IS THE WAY IT *HAD BEEN EVER* SINCE I CAME INTO BEING...EVER SINCE THAT DAY, AN ETERNITY AGO, WHEN MY HERMIT-CHARGE DRAGGED HIS BOAT TO THIS OPEN SPOT IN THE SWAMP AND ROWED OUT AND LABORIOUSLY GROVE LONG POLES DEEP DOWN INTO THE MUD...



WHEN I WAS DONE, HE'D SAT *IN-SIDE* ME AND I'D *RESTLED* HIM AND I'D FELT *HAPPY AND COM-PLATE*...



ONE NIGHT HE'D COME BACK *DRAWING* SOMETHING... SOMETHING *BULGY AND SOFT AND LAMP*, HE'D DUMPED IT INTO HIS FLAT-BOAT AND SHOWN TO ME, AND I'D HEARD HIS MANICAL LAUGH FOR THE *FIRST TIME* AND WITH HIM *DROOLING SPITTLE* AND SHAKING WITH *BABE ANTICIPATION*...



HE *HAD THEN* AS HE *IS NOW*...POUL-SMELLING AND HIDEOUS...AND YET, AS I TOOK SHAPE UPON MY STILT-LEGS, I *DID NOT HATE HIM*, HE WAS MY *CREATOR* AND MY *MASTER*. HE *HAD FORMED* ME OUT OF *LOGS AND PLANKS AND RUSTY NAILS AND CAST-OFF STONE PIPES* AND A *THOUSAND OTHER SALVAGED ITEMS*. HE WAS MY *MAKER* AND MY *FATHER* AND I *LOVED* HIM FOR *BREATHING LIFE* INTO ME...



THEN HE'D *CLUT* THE TRAP DOOR IN MY FLOOR BOARDS AND FASTENED IT WITH *RUSTED HOOKS* AND HE'D BRIMMED DOWN AT THE *SHIMMERING MUD* BELOW ME AND I'D FELT A *FRENCH* GUN THROUGH MY...



AND THEN IT'D *BEGUN*...THOSE *WIGHTLY GOJOURNS* INTO THE MYSTERIOUS SWAMP BEYOND MY *CLAYING-WORLD*...



HE'D BROUGHT BACK A *BODY*...A BODY OF A *HUNTER* WHO'D BEEN CAMPING NEARBY. I'D FELT *SUDDENLY COLD* AS HE'D CARRIED IT INSIDE ME AND DROPPED IT UPON MY FLOOR AND *DANGLERS* RIPPED ITS CLOTHES AWAY. AND THEN I'D *REALIZED*...I'D *REALIZED* IN *REPULSION* AND *DREAD* AS HE'D BEGUN TO *FEAST* UPON THE DEAD FLESH...



...THAT MY *MAKER*...MY *MASTER*...MY *HERMIT-CHARGE* WAS A *SHOUL*...

MY BEAR'S GRABBED AND MY STUDIO CREAKED AND I'D SETTLED AN INCH OR TWO INTO THE MUD BELOW ME AS I'D WITNESSED THE DISGUSTING SCENE... SAW HIM SLASH AND SCRAPE AND MURDER LIKE AN IDIOT-CHILD... STRIPPING THE BONES CLEAN... DEVOURING THE COLD RAW FLESH...



MY HORROR'S CREATOR'S STIFFENED SUDDENLY...LOOKED AROUND WILDLY... THEN RELAXED AS THOUGH HE'D FORGOTTEN FOR A MOMENT, THEN SCRAMBLING JUMP-STARTING... HE'D GONE TO THE DOOR...



WHAT'D YOU DO WITH EDDIE? WHERE IS HE? SO HELP ME, IF YOU'VE HARMED HIM...

...SLOWLY DOWN...DOWN INTO THE...

QUICKSAND!



YAAAAAAGGH... CH... OH...

AND HE'D STARTLED AS THE OTHER HUNTER'S STARTED TOWARD ME... STEPPING OUT INTO THE SLIMMER-ER MUD...

WHAT THEN?



AND THEN IT HEARD THE VOICE... AN ANGRY VOICE... SHOUTING LOUDLY... AND ANOTHER HUNTER'S APPEARED ON THE GRASSY HILLS AT THE EDGE OF THE MUD-FLAT... CLEAVING...

ALL RIGHT, YOU? I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE! O'MON OUT OR I'LL COME IN AND GET YOU...



...AND SWIRLING DOWN...DOWN INTO THE QUICKSAND, MET, SWIRLING AROUND...

OH, LORD...



I'D SHOULDERED AS THE SLIME HAD SWALLOWED HIM UP, BRISING TO HIS CHEST, HIS NECK, HIS SHOULDERS, POURING INTO HIS MOUTH, CUTTING OFF HIS SCREAM IN A BRATING, CHOKING COUGH, THEN CLOSING OVER HIM. NOW I *KNEW* WHY IT'D BEEN BUILT OVER THIS CHOKING SOB. NOW I KNEW THE *REASON* BUT THERE WAS *ANOTHER* REASON TOO... AS I *LEARNED*...

YER, YER...



THE *SHOCK*... MY *MAREN*... MY *CREATOR* HAD TURNED IN *WHEELING* SATISFACTION AND HAD *WAGGLED* BACK INSIDE ME... BACK TO THE *PARTIALLY* DEVOURED CORPSE THAT LAY UPON MY FLOORBOARDS. AND WHEN HE'D *FINISHED*, WHEN HE'D *SATISFIED* HIS *CHAYING*... WHEN THE FLESH WAS *GONE* AND ALL THAT WAS LEFT WERE *BONES* AND GUTTERING *SHARDS*, HE'D *OPENED* THE *TRAP* DOOR...



...AND HE'D *SWEPT* THE *BODY* REMAINS INTO THE *HUNBURY* WAITING *BOB* BELOW ME...



I'D BEEN BORN OF *SCRAPS* AND *SALVAGE* AND *CAST-OFFS* BY A *CREATURE* THAT *SCOFFED* AND *CAST* OFF. I WAS THE *HOME* OF A *SHOUL*... A *SAFE* HOME... A *PRACTICAL* HOME... *PROTECTING* HIM FROM HARM BY A *SURROUNDING* BOB OF *QUICKSAND*... AND *HELPING* HIM TO *AND* HIMSELF OF THE *EVILDOERS* OF HIS *FIENDISH* WORK BY A *TRAP* DOOR IN MY *BAST-FLOORING*. I WAS HIS *SILENT* *CONSORT*... HIS *LIFELESS* *WOODEN* *COLLABORATOR*. AND I WAS *HELPLESS*. COULD I *STOP* HIS *NIGHTLY* *PROWLING*...



COULD I *STOP* HIS *HUNTER-OVEN*, *FLESH-MAGGLED* *ATTACKS*...



COULD I *STOP* HIS *FINDING* A *DANCING* *CAMPFIRE* DEEP IN THE *SWAMP* FAR FROM WHERE I *STOOD*...



COULD I *STOP* HIM FROM *BRINGING* THE *COLD* AND *WHITE* AND *GRIFT* *CORPSES* BACK TO ME...?



COULD I STOP THE IDIOTS THAT  
POUNCEED HIM...RUMORING BLINDLY  
INTO THE WATCHING HUNGRY QUICK-  
SLAP...



COULD I STOP HIM FROM **DUMP-**  
**ING** THE BRIDESOME REMAINS OF  
HIS DISMOUNTING INDUALANCES  
THROUGH THE TRAP-DOOR DOWN  
INTO THE EVIDENCE-SWALLOWING  
QUAGMIRE?



NO! FOR I WAS NOTHING BUT  
PLANKS AND LOGS AND RUSTED  
NAILS...A LIFELESS THING  
THAT COULD ONLY STAND AND WAIT  
AND SEE. I COULD DO NOTHING.  
NOTHING! AND SO I'D STOOD  
BENEATH THE MOSS-HUNG OPPRESS  
TREES AND I'D NESTLED MY VILE  
SECRET...



WHILE BELOW ME, AROUND MY STILT LEGS, THE DUMB-  
WIFE **SHIMMERED** AND **BOILED**. I FELT THE BONES  
OF THE DEAD WHO STUMBLERED INTO IT AND THE BONES  
OF THOSE WHO WERE **DUMPED** INTO IT BRUSH AGAINST  
MY WOODEN FEET.



THE SAME SLIME AND MUCK THAT BOILED UPON A  
NEWLY BORN PLANET AND GAVE BIRTH TO ITS **FIRST**  
**LIFE**...



I FELT A MILLION YEARS OF **DECOMPOSITION** AND  
**DECAY** GARESS MY LIFELESS LEGS. THE SAME **DECOM-**  
**POSITION** AND **DECAY** THAT GARESS THE LEGS OF THE  
ONE-HUNDRED **DANGEROUS** BONE UPON EARS ADO.



AND NOW...NOW I FEEL A **STITCHING** BENEATH THE **SLUM-**  
**MERING** DUCKS AND SLITFISH...A **SHUDDERING**...A **MIL-**  
**ITARY** AND A **MELTING** AND A **COMPLAINING**. I FEEL A  
HUNDRED BODY-PARTS...LONG-ONCE GROWN-USED AND  
BOTTED AND REDUCED TO JELLIED-NOTHINGNESS...**FOUR**  
**TOGETHER**...



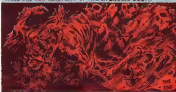
MY HEAVY CHARGE SITS WITHIN MY COB-WEBS'D WALLS, STARING STUPIDLY, LOOKING HIS CRACKED AND FOUL-SMELLING LIPS, GIBBLING INTERMITTENTLY, AND WAITING FOR THE SUN TO BAKE BEHIND THE HANGING CYPRESS TREES TO THE WEST...



I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS DAY. I HAVE WAITED AN ETERNITY FOR THIS MOMENT... FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN THAT WOULD **FACE ME** FROM THE CRUISING SHAMEFUL CAREER THAT HAD BEEN FORCED UPON ME. I **WELCOME** THE STRAINING UPON MY STILT LEGS... THE CRACKING AND SPLINTERING... THE HEAVING OF THE WEIGHT OF ME RESTING UPON THEM...



I **WELCOME** MY DESTRUCTION AND MY FREEDOM. AND I **WELCOME** MY **HIDDEN SECRET'S** FINAL DESTRUCTION, TOO... AS THE PALSATING POOL THAT HAD ONCE BEEN HIS PROTECTION AND THE **CONCEALER** OF HIS CRIMES... AND HIS **HOME**... **STRIKING** THE FLESH FROM HIS BONES AS HE HAD ONCE DONE TO OTHERS... TO THOSE WHO NOW WERE PART OF THIS **AVENGING GOD**.



WHILE **BELOW**, BELOW MY GREEN FLOORS... SPOTTED WITH DRIED CORN... THE QUICKSAND POOL **PULSATES** AND **THROBS**... A **LIVING THING**... A MASS OF **NAVAGED REMAINS** AND **LIVING WHOLFS**... **FUSED INTO ONE**... **REACHING**... **REACHING UPWARD AND OUTWARD AND AROUND MY STILT LEGS**...



I **WELCOME** THEIR FINAL COLLAPSE... AND THEN MY THUNDERING COLLAPSE... MY CREAKING, WHINING PLUNGE DOWN INTO THE SUCKING, SULKING, LIVING, COVERING POOL... TRAPPING MY LOATHSOME CHARGE **WITHIN ME**...



HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S MY **SLIME-SELECTION** FOR THIS ISSUE OF **DM'S BEST-BAST**! **WINDING** UP THAT WAS THE **SHACKS NAME**! JUST **BORDED DOWN** AFTER THAT. **NEVER WROTE ANOTHER YELP-TALK** FOR MY **CRUELS COLLECTION**. **ROTTEN SHAME**, I SAY! **HAD AN INTEREST-STORY STYLE!** A LITTLE **WOODEN**... BUT... WELL... I GUESS **EVIL** WAS JUST A **ONE-STORY SHACK**. WELL, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU **MEET** IN MY MAG, **"TALES FROM THE CURVE"** AND DON'T



**FORGET MY NEW PERIODICAL, "THE CURVE OF TERROR"** CONTAINING **MORE OF THE SAME MADDEATING NON-SENSE** LIKE THIS **STUFF HERE**. **WYE**, **WYE**...





# The Old Witch

FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

# THE HAUNT OF



NO. 28  
DEC.



10¢

# FEAR<sup>®</sup>

FEATURING...



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



## IN MEMORIAM

TALES FROM THE CRYPT:	Born January 1950	Died November 1954
THE VAULT OF HORROR:	Born February 1950	Died October 1954
THE HAUNT OF FEAR:	Born February 1950	Died October 1954
CRIME SUSPENSTORIES:	Born August 1950	Died October 1954
SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES:	Born December 1951	Died September 1954

You may never read this magazine. For that matter, this magazine may never be printed. If it is printed, it may never be distributed. If it is distributed, it may be kept in a bundle behind the counter and never see the light of day. But if, through some miracle, it *does* reach the newsstand, this will probably be the last issue of this magazine you will ever read.

As a result of the hysterical, injudicious, and unfounded charges leveled at crime and horror comics, many retailers and wholesalers throughout the country have been intimidated into refusing to handle this type of magazine.

Although we at E.C. still believe, as we have in the past, that the charges against horror and crime comics are utter nonsense, there's no point in going into a defense of this kind of literature at the present time. Economically our situation is acute. Magazines that do not get onto the newsstands do not sell. We are forced to capitulate. *We've given up. WE'VE HAD IT!*

Naturally, with comic magazine censorship now a fact, we at E.C. look forward to an immediate drop in the crime and juvenile delinquency rate of the United States. We trust there will be fewer robberies, fewer murders, and fewer rapes!

We would like to say in passing: . . . passing away, that is! . . . that if you have enjoyed reading E.C.'s horror and crime efforts over the past five years half as much as we have truly enjoyed creating them for you, then our labors of love have not been in vain.

But enough mush! This is not only an obituary notice; it is also a birth announcement!

BOY... WHAT WE GOT IN STORE FOR YOU! (Ya didn't think E.C. was gonna die with the books, did ya? We got talent we ain't even used yet!)

E.C. is planning the NEW NEW TREND. In January of 1955, we hit five (5) sensational new titles. They won't be horror magazines... they won't be crime magazines! They'll be utterly new and different—but in the old reliable E.C. tradition! Naturally, we can't tell you what they'll be YET... we can feel the hot breath of our floundering competitors who followed us into horror on our necks. When the mags are ready to go, they'll be announced in MAD, PANIC, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, PIRACY, and TWO-FISTED TALES!

We feel it's gonna be a **HAPPY NEW YEAR** with our **NEW NEW TRENDS**

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO, WHY AM I CACKLING? THIS WILL PROBABLY BE THE *LAST ISSUE* OF MY PUTRID PERIODICAL AND 'O' CACKLING? I SHOULD BE CRYING! THE BAD DETAILS ARE IN MY SNOT EDITORS' COLUMN OPPOSITE THIS PAGE ON THE INSIDE FRONT COVER. AS FOR NOW, WELL... PULL UP A TOADSTOOL AND *BOOM!* *PO!*, AND YOUR *SHIVER-O-MEZ*, THE OLD WITCH, WILL DELVE INTO THE DELECTFUL DETAILS OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A BLUE-MORDED REFORMER AND SERVE UP THE HAUNT OF FEAR SPECIAL I CALL...

## The Prude

ON A TYPICAL, RAINY, BLUSTERY, MISERABLE MARCH DAY IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, A TYPICAL GROUP OF ELECTED OFFICIALS SAT IN THE COMMON CHAMBER OF THE MEETING HALL OF A TYPICAL EARLY AMERICAN TOWN CALLED HORTON, CRINGING BEHIND THEIR LONG POLISHED TABLE AND WINOING AT THE THUNDERING WORDS OF CITIZEN WARREN FORBISHER.

BUT NOT TO *RIS* IN PUBLIC, MR. FORBISHER! THIS IS THE YEAR *EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN*, SIR. NOT THE MIDDLE AGES!

SIR IS SIR, MR. BRAD? EITHER YOU ARE FOR SIR, OR YOU ARE AGAINST IT!



Farewell  
—CHASTLY—

AND IF YOU ARE FOR SIR, YOU ARE AGAINST ME. AGAINST *ME* AND MY ASSOCIATES? YOU KNOW THEM, MR. BRAD. YOU KNOW MR. *SCOWS* OF THE HORTON TOWN, MR. *WALLMAN* OF THE WALLMAN BANK, AND MR. *BRIDGE* OF BRIDGE SHIPPING COMPANY. THEY ARE POWERFUL MEN, MR. BRAD!



MR. GEORGE KRAUS ROSE SLOWLY, DREW HIMSELF UP TO HIS FULL FIVE FEET NINE AND CALMLY STARED BACK INTO WARREN FORBISHER'S COLD, GREY EYES....

MR., THIS COUNCIL WAS ELECTED BY ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHTON... **NOT BY YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATES!** I DO NOT KNOW HOW THE OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS FEEL, BUT I WILL NOT BE COERCED. I WILL VOTE AGAINST THIS ABSURD

LAW...



FORBISHER, THE SELF-APPOINTED GUARDIAN OF PUBLIC MORALS... THE PILLAR OF SOCIETY... THE RIGHT-DOING JUDGE OF ALL... STAREDEERED AT KRAUS'S RESOLVE, FLUSHED DEEP RED, AND CHOKED OUT AN INCOHERENT REPLY...

I SHALL SET IT TO IT, MR. KRAUS, THAT THE PEOPLE OF NORTHTON ARE INFORMED OF YOUR OPPOSITION TO DECEMBER 1000 DAY, GENTLEMEN...



WARREN FORBISHER STORMED FROM THE TOWN HALL AND CROSSED TO THE OFFICE OF THE NORTHTON TIMES...

WOULD I WANT YOUR PAPER TO START A CAMPAIGN AGAINST GEORGE KRAUS? TELL YOUR READERS HOW HE IS AGAINST MY EFFORTS TO HALT THE MORAL DECAY OF THIS TOWN. LET IT ON THICK, BOULD.



BUT WARREN FORBISHER MET SUDDEEN AND UNEXPECTED OPPOSITION FROM ONE OF HIS OWN SUPPORTERS...

SORRY, FORBISHER, THAT WOULDN'T BE TRUE! AFTER ALL, COUNCILMAN KRAUS DID SUPPORT YOUR REQUEST FOR THE DEATH PENALTY FOR ADULTERY. HE DID SUPPORT THE REST OF YOUR REFORMS NOW THAT HE THINKS YOU'RE GOING TOO FAR HE'S STOPPED! AND I AGREE!

YOU AGREE?



AND SO, BECAUSE HE WAS FOR GOOD, AND BECAUSE HE WAS POWERFUL, THE PEOPLE OF NORTHTON LISTENED TO WARREN FORBISHER WHEN HE SPOKE AT THE NEXT TOWN MEETING...

DISSENT IN PUBLIC MAY BE A SMALL MATTER, WORTHY OF NO MORE THAN A FEW DAYS IN PRISON... BUT IF COUNCILMAN KRAUS OPPOSED TO SMALL UNIFORM, DOESN'T IT FOLLOW THAT HE WILL SET OUT TO DESTROY EVERY IMPORTANT REFORM WE HAVE ACHIEVED TO PROTECT THIS TOWN'S DECENT PEOPLE?



YES! I SINCERELY FAUGHT YOU WANTED TO DO GOOD FOR OUR TOWN. I SEE NOW THAT YOU'VE BECOME NOTHING MORE THAN A PETTY TYRANT! LAWS LIKE FORBES CAN GO TO SO FAR, THEY CAN REACH A POINT OF RIDICULOUSNESS. NO, FORBISHER, I'M NOT GOING TO GO ALONG WITH YOU AND BLACKEN AN HONEST MAN'S NAME. I WON'T SACRIFICE THE INTEGRITY OF MY PAPER!

YOU'LL BE SORRY, WOULD I? I'LL BREAK YOU AND YOUR YELLOW RAG. I'LL BREAK KRAUS! I STAND FOR GOOD AND GOOD WE CAN POWER



HE HARRANDED HIS LISTENERS: HE RANTED, HE SPOKE IN A QUANTERING VOICE, GORGED WITH EMOTION...

YOU MEN WITH CAUTIONS, YES, EVEN YOUR WIVES. DO YOU WANT THEM EXPOSED TO THE LEISURES OF THIS TOWN... TO THE... I WON'T USE THE WORD IN MIXED COMPANY! I SEE YOU, THEN, THROW OUT THIS COUNCILMAN... THE KRAUS... WHO IS THREATENING THE MORALITY OF OUR BELOVED TOWN!



THE PEOPLE CHEERED THEMSELVES HOARSE, AND COME ELECTION TIME, GEORGE GRAY WAS RECALLED BY THE VOTERS.



THIS IS A **GREAT TRIUMPH** FOR YOU, MR. FORBISHER!

YOU'RE **WRONG**, HALLINAN! THIS IS A TRIUMPH OF **GOOD OVER EVIL**. SIR IN NORTHCHURCH HAS BEEN DEALT A **DEATH BLOW**!

WITH THE PEOPLE'S MANDATE, WARREN FORBISHER BURST AHEAD IN HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST SIR IN HIS HOME TOWN. KISSING IN PUBLIC WAS OUTLAWED. THIEF, HOLDING HANDS, THEN, COMPLES ALONE WITHOUT A CHAPERONE, THE HELP-LESS COUNCIL NEARLY NEEDED APPROVAL AS REFORM AFTER REFORM WAS PROPOSED.



AND SINCE **MAN TAKES HIS DINE WITH HIM** TO THE GRAVE, GENTLEMEN, THE BURNAL OF **MEN AND WOMEN** IN THE SAME CEMETERY IS **INDECENT... IMMORAL!** IT MUST BE STOPPED! THERE MUST BE **SEPERATE CEMETERIES** FOR EACH SEX...

DOES THAT MEAN... OH NO! THAT YOU WANT THOSE **ALREADY BURIED** TO BE **DUG UP AND SEPERATED**? SURELY YOU **DON'T** BELIEVE THAT THE **DEAD**...

THAT IS **PRECISELY** WHAT I DO MEAN, GENTLEMEN! WHO IS TO **SAY** WHAT DOES ON IN THE AFTERLIFE? **SEPERATE THEM!** I SAY! **AVOID ANY POSSIBILITIES**...

**GOULD'S PREDICTION** HAD COME TRUE! THE ANTI-IMMORALITY CAMPAIGN HAD REACHED THE POINT OF **HYPOCRISIES!** THE "SEPERATE CEMETERY LAW" WAS PASSED. WORKMEN, PERSONALLY DIRECTED BY WARREN FORBISHER, OPENED EVERY WOMAN'S GRAVE...



REMOVED HER COFFIN AND GRAVESTONE

AND BURNED THE LADIES "SEPERATELY" IN THEIR NEW CEMETERY ACROSS THE ROAD.



AFTER THAT, ALL THOSE THAT DIED WERE BURIED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CEMETERIES. AND AFTER WARREN FORBISHER VISITED THE TWO GRAVEYARDS TO MAKE SURE THE LAW WAS BEING OBSERVED. HOWEVER, ON ONE OF HIS VISITS, WHAT HE SAW TURNED HIM LIVID WITH RAGE.



WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS? THIS IS A WOMAN'S GRAVESTONE... A WOMAN'S GRAVE BESIDE HER HUSBAND'S! AND HERE'S ANOTHER AND ANOTHER! ALL FRESHLY DONE!

CAN'T BLAME ME, MR. FORBISHER!

OLD SETH HOBKINS, THE CEMETERY CARETAKER, SHRUGGED.

THEY WON'T STAY SEPARATED! THE WOMEN GET UP, TAKE THEIR STONES, COME 'CROSS THE ROAD, AND GET INTO THEIR GRAVES BESIDES THEIR MEN. I CAN'T STOP 'EM!

THAT'S THAT, CHORE! IMPOSSIBLE! THEY'RE DEAD! THE DEAD CAN'T MOVE BY THEMSELVES!



SETH HOBKINS SHRUGGED AT HIS PIPE THOUGHTFULLY.

IF THE DEAD CAN'T MOVE, WHY'D WE SEPARATE 'EM IN THE FIRST PLACE?

THAT'S NOT FOR YOU TO QUESTION AND IF THIS IS SOME SORT OF JOKE, HOBKINS, WELL, I'LL HOLD YOU RESPONSIBLE TO SEE THAT THEY ARE SEPARATED AGAIN AND STAY SEPARATED!



MR. FORBISHER CROSSED THE ROAD TO EXAMINE THE EMPTY GRAVES WHERE THE WOMEN THAT HAD "RETURNED" HAD BEEN BURIED. AND THEN HE SAW THE ONE GRAVESTONE STILL STANDING.

LAURA... LAURA ADAMS.



THE PASTED YEARS ROLLED AWAY BEFORE WARREN FORBISHER'S MIND'S EYE. HE SAW HIMSELF AS HE WAS AT THIRTY-TWO. HE... AND LAURA ADAMS.

WARREN, I CAN'T STAND IT ANY MORE! I WANT TO BE WITH YOU ALWAYS, I WANT TO BE YOUR WIFE!

I'VE TOLD YOU A HUNDRED TIMES, LAURA. I CAN'T DIVORCE HER. I HAVE MY FUTURE TO THINK OF. A SCANDAL WOULD RUIN ME!



HE REMEMBERED IT ALL SO CLEARLY... THAT AWFUL DAY THAT WAS THE FINAL CURTAIN TO HIS OWN SIN... HIS OWN INDISCRETION...



WHAT ABOUT ME, WARREN? I LOVE YOU. I'M NOT SATISFIED SHARING YOU WITH ANYONE. AND WHAT ABOUT MY FUTURE? DON'T YOU THINK I WANT TO BE ABLE TO HOLD MY HEAD UP WHEN I WALK AMONG OTHER WOMEN?

ROBBER KNOWS ABOUT ME, LAURA. BE SENSIBLE! I'LL DO SO AS WE HAVE BEEN, OR NOT AT ALL.

HE REMEMBERED HOW LAURA, POOR SWEET LAURA, HAD STARED AT HIM FOR A LONG MOMENT. THEN TURNED TO HER DESK, AND CRAWLED OUT THE VIAL... HER EYES SHIMMERING WITH TEARS...

THIS IS FOLDSWORTH WARREN, NOW... FOR THE LAST TIME... WILL YOU DIVORCE HER AND MARRY ME?

DON'T BE A FOOL, LAURA. YOU CAN'T BLUFF ME!



HE REMEMBERED HOW LAUREL PUT THE VIAL TO HER LIPS, TOSSED BACK HER HEAD, AND EMPTIED ITS CONTENTS DOWN HER THROAT.



"MY GOD, LAURA! DON'T!"

HE'D RUSHED TO HER SIDE... TOO LATE. WITH HORROR, HE'D REALIZED THAT TO CALL A DOCTOR WOULD EXPOSE HIMSELF TO SCANDAL. HE COULD DO NOTHING BUT STAND AND WATCH HIS BELOVED LAURA WRITHE IN AGONY. HE'D WATCHED HER FOAM AT THE MOUTH, HER FACE DISTORT... TURN PURPLE. HE'D WATCHED HER DIE.



LAURA DROPE

AND THEN HE'D CREPT FROM HER HOUSE IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT AND LEFT HER LYING ON THE FLOOR.



HE'D NOT BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP FOR WEEKS AFTERWARD. HE'D BEEN TORTURED WITH GUILT, TORTURED WITH THE VISION OF HER GROTESQUELY TWISTED PURPLE FACE.



"NOT NO."

HE'D KNOWN HE'D SINNED, AND SO, AT FIRST, HE'D PUNISHED HIMSELF. HE'D TOUCHED NO LIQUOR, NO WINE. HE'D PERMITTED HIMSELF NO THOUGHT OF OTHER WOMEN... NOT EVEN HIS OWN WIFE.



WARREN...

"PLEASE, HENRIETTA, GO TO YOUR OWN ROOM!"

HE'D FINALLY FOUND ESCAPE FROM HIS OWN GUILT BY CONVINING HIMSELF THAT FATE HAD DRIVEN HIM TO SIN SO THAT HE MIGHT KNOW ITS TORMENT AND THUS SAVE OTHERS. HE'D SUBCONSCIOUSLY SET ABOUT RIGHTING HIS OWN WRONGS BY EXPOSING AND DEMANDING THE END OF THE WRONG DOINGS OF OTHERS...

HE'D BEGUN SPEAKING AT TOWN MEETINGS—DEMANDING REFORMS—DEMANDING THE END OF SIN... THEREBY ERASING HIS OWN.



DANCING. THAT'S WHAT'S RUINING OUR YOUTH, DANCING AND STAYING OUT TILL ALL HOURS! WE MUST HAVE A CURFEW.

FORBISHER IS RIGHT!

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, MR. FORBISHER?

I'D LIKE TO COMMENT ON THE MORAL DECAY OF OUR TOWN. THE EVILS AND SINS THAT WE ARE CLOSING OUR EYES TO...





THE "GOOD" FOLKS OF NORTHTON, THOSE WITH THEIR OWN SECRET HIDDEN FAULTS, HAD CALLED TO FORGIVENESS. SWALLOWED HIS WORDS, DEMANDED TO HAVE HIS EVERY SUGGESTED REFORM MADE INTO LAW, HE'D BECOME NORTHTON'S SYMBOL OF RIGHT-EDNESS AND GOODNESS. HE'D BECOME NORTHTON'S POWER.

THERE'S ONLY **ONE SURE CURE** FOR THAT KIND OF MORAL CRIME, DEATH!

WE'RE WITH YOU, FORGIVENESS.

AND WHO IS TO SAY THAT THE PRESENCE OF LAURA ADAMS' BODY IN THE TOWN CEMETERY WAS NOT THE SUBCONSCIOUS INSPIRATION FOR FORGIVENESS'S DEMAND FOR "SEPARATE GRAVEYARDS"? HIS INSPECTION VISIT, SURELY AT LEAST, HAD GIVEN HIM A CHANCE TO COMMUNE WITH HER.

SEE, LAURA. MUCH GOOD HAS COME FROM YOUR DEATH. YOU DID NOT DIE IN VAIN. I HAVE LEARNED FROM IT AND I AM TEACHING OTHERS.

SO WARREN FORGIVENESS SMILED DOWN AT THE GRAVESTONE THAT HAD NOT BEEN MOVED AND HE THOUGHT ABOUT THE MISTAKES OF HIS PAST AND HOW HE'D MORE THAN MADE UP FOR THEM.

HOSKINS? YOU MOVE EVERY WOMAN'S COFFIN BACK HERE AND IF THIS HAPPENS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN IN PRISON!

SO THE WOMEN'S COFFINS WERE AGAIN UPROOTED AND TRANSFERRED ACROSS THE ROAD IN THEIR OWN GRAVESTONES ALONG WITH THEIR GRAVESTONES AND WARREN FORGIVENESS WAS SATISFIED, BUT THEN, THE NEXT TIME HE CAME TO INSPECT.

GOOD LORD!  
HOSKINS!

HOSKINS, I WARNED YOU WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DID THIS AGAIN...

AND I TOLD YOU I'M NOT DOIN' IT! YOU CAN'T STOP HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND SWEETHEARTS FROM BEIN' TOGETHER AFTER THEY'RE DEAD, MR. FORGIVENESS!

DON'T TRY TO FOOL ME, HOSKINS! EITHER THE FAMILIES OF THE DEAD ARE DOING IT, OR YOU'RE DOING IT FOR THEM. I WON'T MAKE IT! THIS IS MY LAST WARNING! TRANSFER THOSE BODIES BACK AND PUT A STOP TO THIS NONSENSE!

Y-YES, SIR!

BUT THAT NIGHT, SUSPICIOUS OF THE OLD CARETAKER AND ANGRY TO TRAP HIM IN THE ACT, WARREN FORGIVENESS RETURNED TO THE CEMETERY.

THERE HE IS—SITTING ON THAT BOLT! HE'S GOT A SMOKE! NOW HE'S LIGHTING A PIPE. PILE HABIT SMOKING! MUST PUT A STOP TO IT.

SUDDENLY WARREN FORBESHER BECAME CONSCIOUS OF MOVEMENT ALL AROUND HIM. THE BRIGHT MOONLIGHT SHONE ON THE STRUGGLING FORMS. THE ROTTING CORPSES OF MEN AND WOMEN, DIGGING THEIR WAY INTO THE NIGHT AIR... LABORING WITH HEAVY GRAVESTONES... RETURNING TO THE SIDES OF THEIR BATES, FORBESHER SCREAMED AND RUSHED TOWARD THEM, WAVING HIS ARMS...



STOP! STOP THIS WICKEDNESS!  
THERE ARE LAWS AGAINST THIS!

AND THEN WARREN STOPPED AMID THE "SUNNIE" CARLEANS...FOR SUDDENLY HE SAW THE MOULDY, MAGGOT-INFESTED, ROTTING CORPSE OF LAURA ADAMS COME FROM HER GRAVE AND STUMBLE TOWARD HIM...

SETH HOGGINS WAITED UNTIL THE TREMORS AND THE SCRAPING AND THE GIGGING HAD DIED AWAY AND SILENCE HAD ONCE AGAIN DESCENDED UPON THE GRAVEYARDS. THEN HE PICKED UP HIS SPADE, SHRUGGED, AND BEGAN FILLING IN THE EMPTY, Gaping HOLES.



NO! LAURA, NO! GO BACK!  
NO! NO...



I SURE WITH THEY'D STAY  
POFF! I'M GETTIN' ANGRY, TIRED  
OF GOIN' THIS EVERY NIGHT AND  
THEN SWITCHIN' 'EM BACK  
WHEN MR. FORBESHER FINDS OUT.

WHEN OLD SETH HOGGINS CAME TO LAURA ADAMS' GRAVE AND LOOKED DOWN INTO THE MOONLIT-ILLUMINATED PIT, HE BLUSHED TO THE ROOTS OF HIS SPARSE GREY HAIR AND HE SHOOK HIS HEAD AND HE SPINNED AT WHAT HE SAW...



WHY, MR. FORBESHER? DON'T YOU KNOW THERE  
ARE LAWS ABOUT THAT SORT OF THING? SAYS  
SHAME ON YOU!

HEY, HEY! WELL, THAT'S THE OPEN-  
ING TERROR-TUNE FOR THIS  
SPARK, FIDDLES. LURA FINALLY  
CRASSED WARREN DOWN WITH HER  
AND THEY ROTTED TOGETHER  
HAPPILY EVER AFTER. NOW THE  
PAULY-KEEPER AWAKES WITH HIS  
MORRIS-MELODY. I'LL BE BACK  
LATER WITH ANOTHER GORGEOUS

ORCHESTRATION IN  
THE MEANTIME, DON'T  
BREAK ANY  
SATURDAY NIGHT  
DATES... HEHEHE,  
THAT IS!  
"BYE...



**WE KNOW  
YOU'LL ENJOY  
THE LUSTY,  
SWASHBUCKLING  
ADVENTURES  
IN OUR NEW  
SEAGOING MAG!  
"PIRACY" IS  
A TREASURE  
CHEST OF SALTY  
SEA YARNS  
PRESENTED IN THE E. C. TRADITION!**



SO SAIL DOWN TO YOUR  
LOCAL NEWSSTAND, MATES...  
DO A LITTLE EXPLORING  
THROUGH THE REST OF THE  
BILGE... AND COMMANDEER  
YOUR COPY, IF YOU'RE NOT  
THE OUTDOOR TYPE AND  
WOULD RATHER IMPORT  
"**PIRACY**" YOU CAN  
SUBSCRIBE! JUST FILL OUT  
THE COUPON AND SHIP  
OFF, TOGETHER WITH ONE  
HUNDRED PIECES OF CENT  
(THAT'S ONE BUCK,  
LANDLUBBERS!) TO:

THE SEASICK EDITORS OF  
PIRACY  
ROOM 706  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

OKAY, YOU FO'C'SLE RATS! I'M  
SHANGHAIED! HERE'S \$1.00 FOR THE NEXT  
EIGHT ISSUES OF **PIRACY**!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

ZONE  
NO.

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

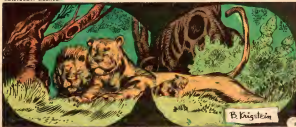
# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! *NO, HOSTS?* THIS IS YOUR *FAULT-KEEPER* AGAIN, YOUR NARRATOR OF *HAZARDOUS NOVEL-ETTES*, WAITING YOU IN FOR SOME *REVOLTING REPERCUSSIONS* IN THE *VAULT OF HORROR*. HELP YOURSELF TO ANY *SIDE* IN THE *PLACE* WHILE I TELL YOU A *FINISH TALE* OF *FEAR* INVOLVING THE *SCARIO* *SHOULDERS* OF A *SAVAGE* *SABOTEUR* NAMED *JOHN CARVEL*, WHOSE EXPERIENCE IN THE *AFRICAN* *ARMIES* WERE *OUT* OF *THIS WORLD*. IT'S A *TRIP-TARK* IN *JOHN'S OWN WORDS*. HE CALLS IT...

# NUMBSKULL



THIS IS THE SCENE I VIEW MY DOMAIN. THIS IS MY REFUGE FROM THE EVIL WORLD OF THE MOST DANGEROUS OF ALL SNAKE ANIMALS... ~~AND~~ THIS IS MY HOME. THIS DEEP, DARK AFRICAN JUNGLE—A SPACIOUS ROOM WALLED IN BY GIANT TROPICAL TREES WHOSE POLARIS FAR ABOVE MEET TO FORM A CATHEDRAL CEILING, THIS IS MY FINAL SETTING-PLACE, FAR FROM MAN AND BEING A MAN, AND KNOWING MAN, AND POSSESSING ALL OF THE TRACHEARY AND CUNNING OF MAN, I WAS FEARED BY MY SUBJECTS, ONCE. THE BEASTS OF THIS JUNGLE—YET, NOW, THEY’VE LEARNED NOT TO FEAR ME, BUT TO LIVE AND PLAY AND REAR THEIR YOUNG NEARBY, WHILE I SURVEY ALL WITH A REMOVED PAT. SILENCE.



AS I LOOK OUT OVER MY HOME, I CAN SEE MY LIFE AS IT *USED* TO BE, WHEN I ROAMED THIS VERY JUNGLE GLADE WITH A MADDENING DESIRE TO *KILL*...



I SEE MY LIFE *THEN*... AS SELF-MADE MONARCH OF THIS JUNGLE... WAITING BY MY TENT FOR THE *FRIGHTFUL SHOOTER* WHO STILL THE CHATTERING DIN



AND WHEN IT *CAME*, I WOULD *SMILE* IN ANTICIPATION OF THE DELIGHTS THAT AWAITED ME SATON UP MY RIFLE AND WOODEN CASELAND DASH OFF TO *FIND* THE PIT THAT HELD MY LATEST VICTIM...



SWIFTLY I WOULD HURRY FROM TRAP TO TRAP, A PLEASURABLE *TUMBLE* COURGING THROUGH MY BODY, CULMINATING IN A WILD EXPLOSIVE *THRILL* WHEN I FINALLY *CAME* TO THE ONE THAT HELD MY PRISONER.



IT WOULD BE A *LION* OR A *PANTHER* OR SOME OTHER INNOCENT CREATURE OF THE OVERGROWTH BUT TO ME, IT WAS THE PERSONIFICATION OF EVERY-ONE I EVER HATED... MY OLD BUSINESS PARTNER WHO'D KILLED ME DRY, MY *WIFE* WHO'D CHEATED... MY *LAWYER*... MY BROTHER... MY FATHER, I WOULD FLING OPEN MY WOODEN CASE WITH *BLISS*...



...AND I WOULD *HAVE MY REVENGE!* I WOULD DRAW FORTH THE INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE... THE CONTRIVANCES OF PAIN AND SUFFERING... AND I WOULD USE THEM ON THOSE I HATED: NEEDLE-NOSED DARTS, WEIGHTED KNIVES...



ONE AFTER THE OTHER, I WOULD FLING THEM INTO THE BRICKING BEAST'S TAWNY NOSE, EACH SCREAM, EACH *PIERCING OF FLESH* BRINGING THE THRILL OF REVENGE SURGING STRONGER THROUGH MY BODY FOR IT WAS MY OLD PARTNER SCREAMING MY *WIFE'S* HIDE, MY *LAWYER'S* BLOOD, MY FATHER'S PAIN...



AFTER A WHILE, I'D SHOOT IT AND PUT IT OUT OF ITS MISERY.

OF ALL THE JUNGLE BEASTS, NONE GAVE ME GREATER SATISFACTION THAN THE APE, FOR WHAT ANIMAL IS MORE LIKE A MAN? I WOULD BIDE MY IN-TRAPS JUST DEEP ENOUGH AND WIDE ENOUGH TO HOLD ONE OF THESE HUMANOID CREATURES.



ONE DAY, AFTER I'D FINISHED ONE OF MY APE TRAPS AND WAS RETURNING TO MY CAMP, I WAS ENRAGED TO SEE AN ARMY OF SMART DANGEROUS ANTS DRAGGING OFF A SUGARLENT SECTION OF ANTELOPE HUMP.



MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO SMASH THE HIDEOUS CRAWLERS INTO JELLY, BUT I THOUGHT OF A BETTER REVENGE. I FOLLOWED THEM AS THEY DRAGGED THEIR PRIZE TO THEIR TWELVE-FOOT ANTHILL THEIR HOME.



I WATCHED THEM SHRED THE HUMP AND CARRY IT INTO THEIR NEST LITTLE BY LITTLE. WHEN THE LAST OF THEM HAD VANISHED INTO THE HOLE ATOP THE HILL, I HURRIED BACK TO CAMP AND RETURNED WITH A LARGE CAN OF *PEPPER*, CLIMBED THE HILL, AND EMPTIED IT INTO THE HOLE....



THEN, I STRUCK A MATCH AND TOSSED IT INTO THE HOLE.



THE HILL SHOOK SLIGHTLY WITH A GULL BLAST. SHEETS OF FLAME SHOT UPWARDS. I WAS DRIVEN OFF BY THE FIRE'S HEAT AND THE SICKENING SCOR OF BURNING LIFE.



I COULD HEAR THE GRACKLING OF THEIR BODIES AS THEY FIRED IN THEIR BLAZING HILL. ONE HADNT MANAGED TO CRAWL FROM THE HOLE AND ESCAPE, FLEEING IN A WILD SICKENING COURSE, CARRYING THE FIRE WITH IT...



I DREW MY PISTOL...WAITED FOR IT, IT SAW ME, HESITATED, THEN BACKED OFF, ITS BODY SHUDDERING. I WOULD HAVE BLOWN IT TO BITS THEN, BUT SUDDENLY A STARTLED SHRIEK SCORCHED OUT OF THE OVERGROWTH. THE SHRIEK OF A TRAPPED APE.



I DROD BACK TO CAMP FOR MY WOODEN CASE, FEELING THAT SURGE OF EXCITEMENT POUND THROUGH MY VEINS.



IT WAS AN APE, ALL RIGHT...IT'S ARMS FINISHED TO ITS SIDES BY THE SHEEN WALLS OF THE PIT, I APPROACHED, LOOING, STUDYING THE SHARLING HARRY FACE, SEEING THE FACES OF THOSE I HATED...

I TOOK MY INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE. PLIERS, HAMMER AND NAILS, GRACE, SAW, AX, AND A GODSEN OTHER CRUEL PAIN-IMFLICTING ARTICLES. FROM MY CASE AND ARRANGED THEM ON THE GROUND BEFORE MY TRAPPED, ALL-BUT-HUMAN CAPTIVE WHO STARED AT THEM CURIOUSLY.

THE EYES! THAT'S WHAT WAS SO SPECIAL ABOUT TORTUREING AN APE. THE EYES WERE ALMOST HUMAN. THEY PLEADED, THEY SHOWED THE EMOTIONS OF PAIN. THEY WERE BUSINESS PARTNER'S EYES, AND CHEATING WIFE'S EYES. I ANTER'S EYES. BROTHER'S EYES... FATHER'S EYES... EYES I HATED.



I JAWORED EACH LOOK OF TERROR, EACH FLASH OF PAIN IN THOSE EYES AS I USED MY INSTRUMENTS OF TORTURE, CRUNCHING BONE, SMASHING FLESH, GRILLING, HACKING, CUTTING.

AND WHEN THE APE WAS DEAD, THE PEOPLE I HATED NO LONGER FEARED AT ME THROUGH ITS EYES.



DAY AFTER DAY, THERE WERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ME TO BREAK MY VENGEANCE UPON MY HATED ENEMIES. THERE WAS THE **BLACK PANTHER**'S CAUGHT IN ONE OF MY MANY PITS... A SHADOW IMAGE OF MY **EX-PARTNER**, WHO'D DIED SHRIeking WITH **FLAMING SPEARS**.



BUT NO ANIMAL GAVE ME AS GREAT A FEELING OF COMPLETE SATISFACTION AS THE **ALMOST-HUMAN SUFFERINGS** OF A **MAN-LIKE APE**. AND SO, FOR THE APE, I DUG MANY TRAPS.



I'D PLUNGED DOWNWARD, SCREAMING, AS SO MANY OF MY APE-VICTIMS HAD DONE BEFORE ME. I'D BECOME WOODEN THERE, MY ARMS PINIONED AT MY SIDES... MY HEAD JUST ABOVE THE GROUND LEVEL... HELPLESS... TRAPPED...



THERE WAS THE **HYENA** NOTED FOR ITS MISCHIEF LAUGHTER THAT I'D SHAPED IN A ROPE LOOP TIED TO A BARK-LINE. AS IT HUNG SUSPENDED, IT BECAME MY **WIFE**, LAUGHING AT ME AS SHE TOLD ME OF HER AFFAIR TO **SILENCED** HER LAUGHTER WITH AN **AF**.



AND THEN, LATE ONE DAY, ABOUT A MONTH AGO, I WAS CROSSING THIS VERY GLADE, RETURNING TO CAMP. I WAS TIRED... NOT ALERT. I DID NOT SEE MY **OWN APE TRAP** UNTIL THE **FLIMSY GRASS MATTING** COLLAPSED UNDER MY FEET.



AND THEN THEY'D COME... OUT OF THE JUNGLE... THE **LION** AND THE **PANTHER**, THE **HYENA** AND THE **APE**... THE **GOBBINS** OF THOSE I HAD TORTURED. THEY'D COME FORWARD ME, **SMILING**. AND THEN THEY'D STOPPED... AS IF THEY WERE **WAITING** FOR SOMETHING.





I'D WAITED 100, TERRIFIED, HELPLESS - PRAYING FOR DELIVER-  
ANCE.



AND THEN I'D HEARD THE RUSTLING,  
AND SEEN THE GIANT ANT PUGH  
THROUGH THE HIGH GRASS AT THE  
CLEARING'S EDGE. SEEN IT CRASH  
TOWARD ME, LEADING AN ARMY OF  
GIANT ANTS FROM THE BRUSH.



AND AS IT CAME CLOSER, I'D  
RECOGNIZED IT. SAW THE AMP-  
HIBILE SCARS UPON ITS SLEEK  
SHELL-LIKE BODY. THE AMP-  
SCARS.



THEN, SUDDENLY IT WAS UPON ME,  
ITS SPRAWLING ARMY AFTER IT, RIP-  
PING - TEARING, STRIPPING MY  
FLESH.



AND AFTER THEY'D FIN-  
ISHED, THEY'D RETURNED.  
THEIR BELLIES BULGED  
TO THE BRUSH.



THE ECHOES OF MY SCREAMS HAVE LONG  
SINCE FRODDED AWAY INTO MY JUNGLE DOMAIN  
NOW, AND I CAN ONLY SIT HERE IN DEATH  
AND SURVEY IT ALL WITH A BENEVOLENT  
SILENCE WHILE THE ANIMALS THAT ONCE  
FEARED ME COME NEAR AND LIVE AND  
FEED AND PLAY. . .



FOR WHAT DO THEY HAVE TO FEAR FROM A HUMAN SKULL, STRIPPED  
CLEAN, BLEACHED WHITE, STICKING UPWARDS. ANKWARDLY, FROM A PIT IN A  
BATTERED SLAB THAT JUNGLE RAINS HAVE LONG SINCE REPILED.



HEHEHE! LIKE MY PICTIC TURN,  
"BEGGED? A TORTURE WOULD? NOW  
IT'S TIME TO CLOSE THE VERMIN-  
INFESTED VAULT OF HORROR  
AND TOSS YOU BACK TO THE OLD  
BITCH WHO'S WAITING WITH A  
WORLD MORGEL MASTERPIECE  
THAT SHOULD DRIVE YOU HOPES!  
IT'S ABOUT A GAL WHO WANTS TO  
PLAY REAL BAD...



MUSIC, THAT IS!  
THEN, SHE LEARNS  
THE SCORE FOR  
HER, NEXT MY THOUGHT  
FOR TODAY IS A  
BITCH IN TIME,  
BARE FRANKEN-  
STEIN? EYENOW.

# A COLLECTOR'S E.C. CHECK-LIST

*Due to frequent requests from avid collectors of E.C. type literature, we are herewith publishing a complete checklist of E.C.'s "New Trend" crime and horror magz.*

## THE CRYPT OF TERROR

No. 17—Apr.-May, 1950 No. 18—Jan.-Jul., 1950  
No. 19—Aug.-Sept., 1950

(title change to)

## TALES FROM THE CRYPT

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No. 22—Feb.-Mar., 1951 No. 35—Apr.-May, 1953  
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## THE VAULT OF HORROR

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## THE HAUNT OF FEAR

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## CRIME SUSPENSORIES

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## SHOCK SUSPENSORIES

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No. 8—Apr.-May, 1953 No. 17—Oct.-Nov., 1954  
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*If you're missing any of the above, and you want to complete your collection... sorry! Absolutely no back issues! You'll have to obtain them elsewhere.—ed.*



HERE'S AN OFFBEAT OPUS SURE  
TO DRIVE YOU NOTES! I CALL IT...

# AUDITION



A SINGLE LARGE NARRED BULB ATOP THE IRON STARD ON THE STAGE PROJECTED ITS PALE LIGHT ACROSS THE VAST HAPPINESS OF THE THEATER, WHERE ROW UPON ROW OF SAPING SEATS WAITED IN LOVELY ANTICIPATION. A YOUNG LADY EMERGED SHYLY AND HESITANTLY FROM THE WINGS, HER CLARINET UNDER HER ARM. SHE, TOO, FELT THE SADNESS OF THE DESERTED SHOWPLACE. THEN, FROM NOWHERE SEEMINGLY, CAME A SUDDEN SCRAMBLING OF CHAIRS, A MURMUR WHIRRING, THE MELODIOUS BLENDING OF INSTRUMENTS WITH FEMALE VOICES...AND FROM THE STYMIAN ORCHESTRA ITS A RISING PLATFORM LIFTED THE BAND INTO VIEW...



PHIL VITALE STOOD BEFORE HIS ALL-GIRL ORCHESTRA, DRAMATICALLY WAIVING HIS BATON, LEADING IT IN ITS RATIONALLY FAMOUS THEIR SONG. AS THE FINAL STRAINS PASSED, HE RAFFED FOR SILENCE.

ALL RIGHT, GIRLS! LET'S REHEARSE  
NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT



NOW CAME THE DISORGANIZED RUSTLE OF MUSIC SHEETS ON STANDS, THE UNHARMONIOUS TUNING OF INSTRUMENTS. ONCE AGAIN, VITALE RAFFED HIS BATON. INSTANTLY A DEATHLY HUSH FELL. THEN THE BAKER GIRL WITH THE CLARINET STEPPED FORWARD.



PHIL VITALE WINCED, DROPPED HIS ARMS AND STARED HOLY AT THE INTRUDER...

AND...JUST WHAT DO YOU WANT, MISS?

MR. VITALE, I'D LIKE A CHANCE TO BE IN YOUR BAND.



AS THE GIRL, ETHEL STARR... SO OBVIOUSLY IN HER TEENS...FUMBLING WITH HER CLARINET CASE, BLURTING FORTH HER WELL-REHEARSED STORY VITALE'S ANGERS SUBSIDED. HE WINKED SLYLY AT HIS BAND...

...AND EVEN WHILE I WAS PLAYING WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA, I KEPT TAKING LESSONS. AND I'VE NEVER MISSED A DAY'S PRACTICE...FOR EIGHT WHOLE YEARS, MR.



THOUGH THE BAND LEADER WORE AN AMUSED SMILE, ETHEL COULD SENSE HIS GROWING IMPATIENCE. SHE FELL SILENT, EXTRICATED HER CLARINET, AND RAISED HER EYEBROWS QUESTIONINGLY.



ETHEL LAUNCHED INTO AN IMPROMPTU ORIGINAL MELODY ON HER LUGORICE STICK...SWEET AND HAUNTING AT FIRST...THEN HOT, WILDLY ABANDONED... VITALE SPARK IN EVERY NOTE.



SILENCE GREETED HER SPIRITED PERFORMANCE. ETHEL LOOKED FROM THE LEADER TO HIS STORY-FACED BAND...



MR. VITALE GLANCED AT BELINDA, HIS VIOLINIST. SHE REPLIED WITH AN ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE SHAKE OF HER HEAD. HE LOOKED BACK AT ETHEL...AT HER SHAPELY FIGURE...HER LOVELY FACE, AND HE SHRUGGED...



THE BAND LEADER ABRUPTLY TURNED HIS BACK ON ETHEL. AND STRIDE AWAY, SHE FOLLOWED HIM. PLEADING...



ETHEL PERSISTED, AND HE WHIRLED ON HER SUDDENLY... HIS EYES FLASHING IN FURY.



THE YOUNG CLARINETIST LEFT THE THEATER IN A STATE OF HOPELESS DEFECTION. BUT THE NEXT DAY SHE WAS BACK WITH RENEWED ENTHUSIASM...



SHE WAITED FOR HIM OUTSIDE THE STAGE DOOR.



SHE MET HIM AGAIN IN FRONT OF HIS APARTMENT...



SHE CLIMBED INTO HIS TAXI...



SHE INVADDED HIS PRIVACY...



...EVEN HIS DRESSING ROOM...



YOU'VE GOT A NERVE COMING IN HERE FEELING I WASN'T DRESSED?

PLEASE, MR. VITALS! PLEASE! IF YOU WON'T LET ME BE IN YOUR HAND... I'LL KILL MYSELF!



PHIL VITALE SMILED. HIS SHOULDERS  
SAGGED RESIGNEDLY...

YOU WANT TO BE IN  
MY BAND THAT  
BADLY?

OH, YES... YES...  
PLEASE, MR. VITALE?  
PLEASE?



WITH NO FURTHER WORD, THE BANDLEADER TOOK ETHEL BY  
HER HAND AND LED HER TO THE LARGE ROOM BENEATH THE  
STAGE WHERE HIS GIRLS WERE STARTING TO FILE ONTO THE  
PLATFORM THAT WOULD CARRY THEM UP INTO THE EMPTY  
THEATER...



I... I CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITH HER.  
SHE'S ADDICTING ME! NOW, SHE'S  
THREATENING TO KILL HERSELF! SHE  
WANTS TO BE IN THE BAND!



PHIL VITALE LOOKED AT HIS  
VIOLINIST, BELINDA, WITH A  
BLURRY LOT OF HIS EYEBROWS.  
SHE BLANCED AT ETHEL AND  
ROOSED... SMILING...

DEAR, MISS STARK!  
IT'S ALL RIGHT  
WITH MY GIRLS!

OH, THANK  
YOU... THANK  
YOU!



JOLLYLY SHE STARTED TOWARD  
THE PLATFORM BUT VITALE STOPPED  
HER...

WOLD IF, YOUNG LADY,  
YOU CAN'T BE IN MY  
BAND LIKE THAT?  
FIRST... YOU'LL HAVE  
TO BE MADE READY!

READY?



HE LED HER TO A LOCKER AND TOOK  
OUT A SMALL LEATHER CASE. FROM  
THIS, HE REMOVED A HYPODERMIC  
NEEDLE AND A TINY BOTTLE OF GREEN-  
ISH LIQUID. A SINISTER SMILE CROSSED  
HIS FACE AS HE FILLED THE HYPO-  
DERMIC...

WHAT, WHAT'S  
THAT FOR?

YOU WANT TO BE  
IN MY BAND, DON'T  
YOU? WELL, THIS  
WILL PREPARE YOU...



BEFORE SHE COULD OBJECT, THE BANDLEADER HAD  
THRUST THE NEEDLE INTO ETHEL'S ARM AND EMPTIED  
THE JADE FLUID...

YOU CAN'T BE IN MY BAND  
AS YOU ARE! THIS WILL  
MAKE YOU READY!

I... SEE... I...  
I'M AFRAID!



A WAVE OF ICY FEAR STRIPPED ETHEL. A HURNNESS  
CAME OVER HER, STARTING FROM HER FEET, MOVING UP,  
POSSESSING HER ENTIRE BEING. SHE SAW, YET COULD  
NOT FEEL, THAT VITALE WAS TAKING HER PULSE.

NO NEED TO BE AFRAID ANY  
LONGER, MISS STARK! YOU ARE  
QUITE DEAD!



ETHEL FOLLOWED VITALE TO THE PIT-PLATFORM, AND AS IT HUMMED IN SLOW ASCENT, SHE BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND.

DEAD? MR. VITALE SAID I'M DEAD? YET I CAN WALK? I'M A ZOMBIE? THAT'S WHAT HE'S MADE ME INTO! A ZOMBIE? ONE OF THE LIVING DEAD?

AND YOU'VE GOT TO BE DEAD TO BE IN MY BAND, MISS STARK!



SHE STARED BLANKLY. HER FACE PALLID... HER EYES FIXED. BUT INSIDE, HAPPINESS SURGED THROUGH ETHEL.

THAT'S WHAT HE MEANT WHEN HE SAID I WAS TOO YOUNG! TOO YOUNG TO DIE! BUT I DON'T CARE! I DON'T CARE!

WELL, GIRL! SHE WANTED TO BE IN MY BAND! HERE SHE IS! SHE'S DEAD!



BUT ETHEL WAS WRONG! THEY WEREN'T RUSHING TO GRIEF HER, FOR WHEN THEY REACHED HER THEY WERE DRINKING SPITTLE AND RIBBING IDIOTICALLY... AND THEY WOULD FORE HER APART.

YOU SEE, MISS STARK... YOU'VE GOT TO BE DEAD TO BE IN MY ORCHESTRA... PHIL VITALE'S ALL SHDUL ORCHESTRA...



HE LED HER FROM THE PLATFORM TO THE STAGE WHERE THE BAND SAT, WAITING...

I SEE IT ALL, NOW! THEY'RE ALL ZOMBIES! THE WHOLE BAND! ... ALTHOUGH I REALLY FELT THAT YOU WERE A BIT TOO YOUNG, TOO UNDER-DEVELOPED.



AS IF THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS A SIGNAL, THE GIRL BROKE FROM THE BANDSTAND IN A WILD STAMPEDE.

NOW MY AMBITION IS FINALLY REALIZED! HOW LONG I'VE WAITED AND BREAKED AND PRAYED FOR THIS MOMENT! SEE NOW THEY'RE RUSHING TO WELCOME ME!



HEH, HEH! NO, THEY WEREN'T RUSHING TO GRIEF ETHEL... THEY WERE RUSHING TO EAT HER. SO THE POOR GIRL, GOT HER WISH... SHE ENDED UP IN THE BAND AFTER ALL... INSIDE THEIR FORMER, THAT IS! "ALL SHDUL" ORCHESTRA! OH, MOUNTAIN! THOSE GIRLS ARE STRICTLY FROM HUNGER, EH? HEH, HEH! WELL, AS THE STARVING FROMBONIST SAID... I'D BETTER BLOW THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S HEAD TO HORN IN WITH HIS MORBID MUSIC.

OH, BY THE WAY, IF YOU SEE A MUSICIAN-VICTIM OF A MARIAC AT-KILLER, MAKE THIS CLEVER COMMENT: SEE! CLEFT? "WEL, NOW!"





## 500 TEETH



The window slid open easily, his gloved hands grasping the sill, Villani swung lightly into the room. As his feet pressed down upon thick carpet, he turned and lowered the window, snapping the lock shut. No sense in advertising the fact that he was busting into the dump ... there'd be plenty of talk later, when the robbery was reported to the cops.

A strange sound made Villani wheel in surprise: a swarm of tiny dogs had hurtled into the room and were frantically muzzling his trousers, sniffing at his shoes, licking his gloved fingers. Villani's eyes widened with fear as he counted a dozen creatures hemming him in ... then a smile of relief creased his anxious face. Miniature Doberman Pinschers! Same kind of pooches he'd seen in the pet shop window on the way over. Their full-on big brothers were ferocious when riled, but THESE little critters looked friendly enough. Like romping puppies.

Kneeling down amidst the horde of tiny dogs, Villani chuckled as the squirming creatures slithered joyfully into his arms, their tongues slobbering frenziedly against his face and neck. "How's about showing me where the family jewels're hidden?" Villani chorled. Startling up, he shrugged off the clamoring animals. "Some watchdogs YOU half-pints make!"

With the spindly-legged little dogs frolicking at his heels, Villani moved quickly up the staircase and into the lavish master bedroom. It took him a moment to locate the safe, behind a wall bracket ... a few exploratory twists of the dial and the door slid open. The dogs sat watchfully as Villani pulled a tray of glittering gems from the vault and dumped the stones into his coat pocket. With a broad grin,

after he had shut the vault and replaced the wall bracket, Villani chirped at the dogs, who swarmed toward him, whining for attention.

"Thanks for your help, pooches!" Villani laughed. "You've welcomed me like a friend of the family ... done everything but pour me a cup of coffee! I'd hate to have the likes of YOU guarding MY valuables!"

The dogs frisked down the stairs ahead of Villani, blocking him as he moved toward the escape window ... their puny bodies spilling over one another in their violent game. At the bottom of the steps Villani tripped over one of the squealing animals ... his smile faded and his foot lashed out in sudden anger. "Time to stop being so paky-waky," Villani rasped. "I gotta get outta here before ..."

His foot struck another dog, he lost his balance and sprawled headlong onto the thick carpet. Villani's hands jerked to his face to protect himself from the slobbering tongues ... instead, he felt the sharp impact of teeth slashing at his flesh, heard enraged snarls deep in a dozen furry throats.

Thrashing wildly, to free himself from the savage attack on his clothes and skin, Villani was engulfed by the horde of writhing bodies pressing in upon him. Gleaming fangs tore at Villani's throat; a gush of blood splattered his shirt and flowed over his ferocious tormentors. The room began to whirl for Villani, as he realized that the skin of his face had been torn down to the bone ... his fingers were shredded ... he felt his tortured body being buffed ... burned ...

"They ... tracked ... me ... !" Villani gasped in his death spasm. "Five hundred ... tracked by a dozen killers with ... with five hundred teeth!"

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, HERE! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER, HOST OF THE CRYPT OF TERROR, TO SERVE DES-  
BERT IN THIS MORBID FOUR-GOARSE WOLD-MEAL, AND WIND-UP FEASTIVITIES FOR THE OLD WITCH'S  
MOCK-MAN, SO CRAWL INTO THE GREEPY CAVERNS OF GADAVEROUS CAVORTINGS AND SUFFER A COFFIN  
SPELL AS I NARRATE THIS HAUNGEATING NOVELETTE OF ECCENTRIC EMBALMING. IT'S A FAVORITE OF  
MINE CALLED...

## A WORK OF ART!



THE AIR OF JARVIS EDWARDS' LABORATORY WAS  
HEAVY WITH THE SHARP SUFFOCATING ODOR OF  
FORMALDEHYDE. THE YEARS SHOWED THEM-  
SELVES ON THE AGING MORTICIAN... HIS NEARLY  
HAIRLESS HEAD... THE TREMBLING OF HIS  
VENEERED HANDS. YET JARVIS EDWARDS WORKED  
WITH SUCH DEFT, SORE HIMSELF WITH SUCH  
DIGNITY, THAT THE CORPSE ON THE WHITE MAR-  
BLE TABLE LOOKED, AS THEY SAY, SO NATURAL...  
AS IF IN PEACEFUL SLUMBER. FOR THIS WAS  
JARVIS EDWARDS' PRIDE... A DEEP PRIDE IN HIS  
ART. AND WHEN HE'D FINISHED THE JOB, HE  
TURNED WITH THAT SAME PRIDE AND DIGNITY TO  
FACE HIS DAUGHTER, ELAINE, AND HER NEW HUS-  
BAND.

I DON'T APPROVE OF ELOPEMENTS,  
MR. TULLY! I'M OLD FASHIONED  
ENOUGH TO HAVE EXPECTED YOU  
TO ASK ME FOR MY DAUGHTER'S  
HAND IN MARRIAGE...

YOU  
WOULD  
NOT  
HAVE  
APPROVED

FATHER, YOU  
SEE, ANDREW  
ISN'T WORKING!



JARVIS EDWARDS DREW HIMSELF UP TO THE FULL LENGTH OF HIS CADAVREUS FIGURE. HIS JAW WORKED AS, FOR A MOMENT, HE STOOD IN STONY SILENCE. AT LAST, WITH AN OBVIOUS EFFORT AT SELF-CONTROL, HE ADDRESSED HIS NEW SON-IN-LAW.

YOU... YOU HAVE NO JOB, MR. TULLY? THEN JUST HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO SUPPORT YOUR WIFE?

IF YOU'D HELP ME, SIR, I'D LIKE TO BE AN UNDER-TAKER! ELAINE SAYS THERE'S LOTS OF MONEY IN IT.



ANDREW TULLY HAD TOUCHED A TENDER SORE SPOT OF JARVIS EDWARDS' LIFE...

UNDER-TAKER, INDEED? I FORBID YOU TO USE THAT WORD IN THIS HOUSE! I, MR. TULLY, AM A MORTICIAN! AND I AM ONE OF THE FEW MEMBERS OF MY PROFESSION WORTHY OF THE NAME! THE REST ARE BUTCHERS!



I MEANT NO OFFENSE, SIR...

YES, BUTCHERS' MONEY! THAT'S ALL THEY'RE INTERESTED IN! WHAT ABOUT PRIDE IN YOUR WORK, YOUNG MAN? WHAT ABOUT LOVE OF A FINE ART? EMBALMING IS A FINE ART, MR. TULLY.



I'M WILLING TO LEARN, MR. EDWARDS! I'LL WORK HARD...

LET'S FACE IT, FATHER! YOU NEED ME TO LOOK AFTER YOU, AND ANDREW NEEDS A PROFESSION! TEACH HIM EMBALMING AND WE'LL STAY HERE... LIVE WITH YOU... AND I CAN GO ON KEEPING HOUSE FOR YOU.



THE OLD MAN CONSIDERED FOR A MOMENT, THEN SHRUGGED. HIS FACE ASSUMED AN AIR OF HELPLESS RESIGNATION...

YES, I DO NEED YOU, ELAINE! ALL RIGHT, I'LL TEACH YOUR NEW HUSBAND MY ART. I ONLY HOPE AND PRAY HE'LL NOT BECOME ONE OF THOSE BUTCHERS!

THANK YOU, FATHER!



AND SO YOUNG, AMBITIOUS ANDREW TULLY BECAME JARVIS'S PUPIL...

BUT GASP... YOU'RE REMOVING ALL OF THE VITAL ORGANS, MR. EDWARDS! I THOUGHT THAT ONLY THE BLOOD IS REPLACED WITH FORMALDEHYDE!

I TOLD YOU, ANDREW... WHEN I EMBALM A BODY, IT IS A WORK OF ART! IT WAS AN ART WITH THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS... AND THEY REMOVED THE VITAL ORGANS!



IT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A WASTE OF TIME, MR. EDWARDS! AFTER ALL, WHEN A MAN IS DEAD, HE'S DEAD! AND WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE IF IT TAKES A LITTLE LONGER FOR HIM TO ROT IN HIS GRAVE? WHY, YOU COULD DO THREE BODIES IN THE TIME IT TAKES YOU TO DO THIS ONE!

I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO MAKE YOU UNDER-  
STAND...



THOUGH THEY STOOD AT OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE POLE WHERE SMILING WAS CONCERNED, ANDREW TULLY TRIED HARD TO LEARN ALL THAT HIS STUBBORN FATHER-IN-LAW TAUGHT HIM. AND, AT LAST, THE YOUNG MAN WAS GIVEN A CADAVRE OF HIS OWN...

NO! NO! ANDREW, THAT'S NOT THE WAY I SAVED YOU TO HOLD A SCAFFOL! NO! IT GRATES ME TO SEE SUCH CRUELNESS!

OH, SO WHAT? WHO'LL SEE THE WISDOMS ANFRAYE!



I'LL SEE THEM... AND YOU'LL SEE THEM. IT'S A QUESTION OF PROFESSIONAL PRIDE! A HEAT INDIGN SHOULD BE...

I KNOW... A WORK OF ART? WELL, I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ART! I HAVE TO EARN A LIVING!



OFTEN DURING HIS MONTHS OF APPRENTICESHIP, ANDREW WOULD RETURN TO THE APARTMENT OVER THE MORTUARY AND HE'D COMPLAIN TO ELAINE...

I TELL YOU IT'S CRAZY OPERATING ON DEAD PEOPLE, ELAINE! I CAN'T SEEM TO GET MY HANDS SCRUBBED ENOUGH! IT SICKENS ME! NOW CAN I FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR FATHER DOES AGAINST MAKING MONEY?

FATHER IS HIGHLY RESPECTED IN HIS FIELD, ANDREW!



HE CALLS THEM ALL "BUTCHERS"! HE THINKS I'M ONE, TOO! WELL, I JUST BELIEVE IN MAKING A CORPSE PRESENTABLE ENOUGH FOR THE MOURNERS TO TAKE THEIR LAST LOOK AT IT, AND...

YOU'RE AT LIBERTY TO FIND EMPLOYMENT WITH ANY OTHER MORTICIAN WHO'LL HAVE YOU IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT HERE, ANDREW!



JARVIS EDWARDS STOOD IN THE DOORWAY, GRIM-FACED. ANDREW FLUSHED WITH EMBARRASSMENT...

I'M BURYING HIM! I DON'T SEE YOU STANDING THERE! BELIEVE ME, THERE'S NO MAN IT'S RATHER WORK FOR! IT'S JUST THAT THERE'S SO MUCH MONEY TO BE MADE IF YOU'D ONLY...

BURY THEM FAST, RASE IN THE PROFITS... QUICK JOBS... EH, ANDREW? WELL, I DON'T HAVE IT IN ME! PEOPLE AREN'T CATTLE! HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF...



I WOULDN'T FEEL ANYTHING! I'D BE DEAD! I WOULDN'T CARE HOW THEY BURY ME!

I KNEW IT! YOU'VE GOT THE SOUL OF A BUTCHER!

STOP IT... BOTH OF YOU! MUST YOU BE ALWAYS SICKERING?



BEFORE LONG, ANDREW RECEIVED HIS LICENSE TO PRACTICE UNDERTAKING... YET JARVIS, ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION, SHOWED HIS CONTENT FOR HIS SON-IN-LAW'S ABILITY.

AN, I SEE YOU ARE BUSY WITH ANOTHER VICTIM, ANDREW, HERE? I BROUGHT YOU THIS TO WORK WITH.

A CLEVER! VERY FUNNY! WELL, I DON'T APPRECIATE YOUR HUMOR, MR. EDWARDS, BY YOUR STANDARDS, I MAY BE A BUTCHER, BUT MY PRIME CONCERN IS TO SUPPORT MY WIFE... YOUR DAUGHTER.

JARVIS CONTINUED TO DISAPPROVE OF ANDREW'S CLIMBY EFFORTS AS A MORTICIAN AND THE YEARS PASSED. ONE DAY, JARVIS SUFFERED A SILENT HEART ATTACK AND WAS CONFINED TO HIS BED. HE BECAME SLIM AND MOROSE AND DEPRESSED.

I MUSTN'T DIE, ELAINE! I CAN'T!

NOW, FATHER. DR. PARRIS SAYS ALL YOU NEED IS A WEEK OR TWO OF REST AND YOU'LL BE GOOD AS EVER. COME, DRINK SOME OF THIS BROTH.

JARVIS EDWARDS STARED OFF INTO SPACE.

I'LL BE ALL RIGHT THIS TIME, YES... BUT IN A FEW MONTHS... A YEAR, PERHAPS, I'LL HAVE ANOTHER ATTACK... A FATAL ONE? THEN, CHUCK, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY BODY? WHO'LL BE MY MORTICIAN?

THERE, NOW AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU TAUGHT ME, MR. EDWARDS, WHY, I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU!

SUDDENLY, JARVIS' EYES FILLED WITH HORROR.

NO! NO! YOU'VE GOT TO PROMISE ME, ELAINE, PROMISE ME YOU WON'T LET ANDREW EMBALM ME! DON'T LET HIM LAY A HAND ON ME! PROMISE ME! PROMISE!

ALL RIGHT, FATHER! I PROMISE! CALM YOURSELF! DR. PARRIS WARNED YOU AGAINST BECOMING EXCITED...

ALTHOUGH JARVIS EDWARDS RECOVERED FULLY FROM HIS ATTACK, HE NEVERTHELESS REMAINED SOMBER AND DEPRESSED, ONE TOPIC WAS FOREMOST IN HIS WORDED THOUGHTS... EVEN AT DINNERTIME.

I WON'T HAVE MY BODY MUTILATED BY ANY OF THOSE FUMBLING BUTCHERS. I WON'T.

GRAY, MR. EDWARDS? GRAY, THEN WE'LL HAVE YOUR BODY CREMATED! ANDREW!

HIS FACE ASHEN WITH TERROR, JARVIS BOLTED FROM THE TABLE.

CREMATED? OH, GOD, NEVER! TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN AN URM OF ASHES! NO! NOBODY'S GOING TO DO THAT TO ME! NO! NO!

ANDREA, THAT WAS CRUEL!

I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS, ELAINE! I TELL YOU IF THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL EXPLODE!

TENSION IN THE MORTICIAN'S HOUSEHOLD MOUNTED WORKING WITH JARVIS BECAME UNBEARABLE FOR ANDREW...

MY LORD, SHE ISN'T A FOOTBALL! SHE'S HER UP... DON'T LACE HER! OH, NOW I BREAD THE TIME WHEN ONE OF YOU MEATCUTTERS TURNS MY BOY INTO AN ANIMAL CARCASS!

THAT'S ALL YOU TALK ABOUT! FOUR BOOP! WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT FOUR BOOP?



LISTEN, ANDREW! ALL THROUGH LIFE MAN SUFFERS INDEMNITIES. AT LEAST, IN DEATH, HE DESERVES THE SIMPLE MARK OF RESPECT... A DECENT EMBALMING.

THAT'S LIKE GIVING HIM FLOWERS AT HIS FUNERAL! WHAT? HE CAN'T SMELL THEM?



USUALLY IT WAS ELAINE WHO PREVENTED A VIOLENT ARGUMENT FROM DEVELOPING BETWEEN HER HUSBAND AND FATHER.

ARE YOU TWO STILL AT IT DOWN THERE? FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, STOP THE NOISES AND COME UP FOR DINNER!



NOW THAT YOU'RE QUIETLY SEATED, THIS LETTER CAME IN THE MAIL... IT'S FROM THE UNITED UNDER-TAKERS ASSOCIATION. THEY'RE HAVING THEIR ANNUAL CONVENTION. I THINK ONE OF YOU OUGHT TO GO. IT'D DO YOU GOOD TO GET AWAY FROM EACH OTHER FOR A WHILE.



YOU WON'T CATCH ME COMING THERE! I DON'T WANT ANY OF THOSE MEAT-PAKERS NEAR ME... NOT NOW, NOR WHEN I DIE!

ANDREW ROSE FROM THE TABLE, FUMING...

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, MR EDWARDS! NOBODY IS GOING TO CUT YOU OFF LIKE IT OR AID. THEY'LL FILL YOU WITH FORMAL-DEHYDRO, SLAP SOME ROUSE ON ON YOUR FACE, NAIL THE LIDS ON YOUR COFFIN, DROP YOU INTO THE SPOON, AND SEND ELAINE AND ME THE BILL!



JARVIS EDWARDS SHUDDERED AT ANDREW'S COLD-BLOODED MATTER-OF-FACTNESS, AND HE LOOKED PLEADINGLY AT HIS DAUGHTER.

YOU TWO WON'T WHO'S GOING TO SHOW THEM THE RIGHT WAY, MR. EDWARDS? YOU'VE ALWAYS SAID YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THAT REALLY KNOWS HOW TO EMBALM...



ELAINE BROKE IN ANGRILY...

STOP IT! BOTH OF YOU! STOP...

ELAINE, YOU'RE RIGHT! I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY, I'LL GO TO THAT UNDER-TAKERS CONVENTION!



AND SO, ANDREW TULLY WENT OFF TO JOIN HIS UNDERTAKERS AT THE CONVENTION IN CHICAGO. MEANWHILE, JARVIS EDWARDS BECAME MORE AND MORE MOODY. ONE NIGHT, HE AND ELAINE WERE SITTING QUIETLY IN THE LIVING ROOM. ELAINE WAS EMBROIDERING AND JARVIS WAS THUMBING ABSENTLY THROUGH A MAGAZINE. SUDDENLY

WHAT IS IT, FATHER? YOU'RE DREAMING? YOU'RE DREAMING?

AM I, DREAM? PERHAPS? YOU SEE, I'VE JUST SOLVED MY PROBLEM!



THEN JARVIS BEGAN TO WRITE LETTERS, AND ENCLOSE CHECKS IN THEM.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, FATHER?

YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL SEE!



ON? STILL WORRIES ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM AFTER HE DIES?

HE'S BEEN ORDERING THINGS—THINGS IN MAGAZINES. I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT ANYTHING ABOUT IT EXCEPT THAT HE'S BEEN SO SECRETIVE...



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, JARVIS BROUGHT MANY MORE MAGAZINES INTO THE HOUSE, BUNDLING THEM OFF TO THE PRIVACY OF HIS BEDROOM. THERE, FOR HOURS UPON HOURS, HE WOULD PORE OVER THEM, READING, NOTING, PLANNING.

FATHER, IT'S LATE! YOU SHOULD BE ASLEEP!

JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES, ELAINE. NOW, BE A GOOD GIRL AND CLOSE THE DOOR AND LEAVE ME ALONE!



ANDREW TULLY CAME HOME FROM THE UNDERTAKERS' CONVENTION A WIDER AND MORE EAGER MAN. HE' LEARNED MANY TRADE SECRETS WHILE HE WAS THERE. SHORT CUTS TOWARD RUNNING A MORE PROFITABLE OPERATION. HE SPOKE BLOWBOLLY OF HIS FELLOW MORTUARIANS TO ELAINE...

A GREAT BUNCH, HONEY, I TELL YOU. THEY MADE ME PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION. AND SHARP? BAH, WHAT I LEARNED IN CHICAGO IS GOING TO MAKE US RICH!

I'M GLAD, ANDY, BUT—WELL, I'M WORRIED ABOUT FATHER!



ORDERING THINGS? WHAT KINDS OF THINGS?

I DON'T KNOW! WHENEVER A PACKAGE ARRIVES, HE TAKES IT INTO THE LABORATORY WITHOUT OPENING IT. HE'S THERE NOW. HE'S ALWAYS THERE, HAMMERING AND PUTTERING. I HAVE TO CALL HIM THREE AND FOUR TIMES FOR SUPPER!



ANDREW FORMED HIS FATHER-IN-LAW WORKING ON A "CUSTOMER" IN THE LABORATORY. THE CLIPMAN'S WOOD BEAMED LIGHT AND GAY IN CONTRAST TO THE GLOOM OF THE SURROUNDINGS. HIS QUICK, EFFICIENT LABORS ON THE BLUISH CORPSE UNDER THE OVERHEAD LIGHT WERE IN THE MANNER OF A SEASONED PERFORMER ON A STAGE. HE LOWBOULED WITH A QUICK SMILE AS HIS SON-IN-LAW ENTERED...

IT'S GLAD TO SEE YOU  
ENJOYING SO WELL.  
MR. TOWNSEND

AN. ANOT, WHEN YOU'RE BACK  
JUST IN TIME TAKE OVER ON THE  
FELLOW, WILL YOU? I'VE GOT TO GO  
OUT AND MAIL A FEW ORDERS.

CHURCHES & SCHOOLS  
CHURCHES & SCHOOLS  
OF ALL THE  
COUNTRIES WE  
SERVE

HOW, NOW? THIS  
DOESN'T CONCERN  
YOU, MR. BOB?  
NOT YET.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	52
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YOU'RE *STUPID*, BECAUSE HE *IS* WORKING ON SOMETHING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT *IS* BUT I'M GOING TO *STAND OUT*.

PLEASE  
DON'T LET'S  
HAVE ANY  
MORE  
APPROPRIATE  
MONEY

THAT NIGHT AFTER SUPPER, JARVIS  
EXCUSED HIMSELF AND HURRIED TO  
THE LABORATORY BOON THE  
SOUND OF HAMMERS AND  
SAWING CATCHED HIS EYE.

I'M GOING DOWN AND  
SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO!

ANDREW DECIDED TO THE LABORATORY. THE DOOR WAS CLOSED. HE TRIED THE KNOB. HE SHOUTED AROUND THE CORNER WITHIN.

2000

DO NOT  
WALK AWAY  
FROM THE  
CLOCK

DAY AFTER DAY, PACKAGES ARRIVED. NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, JARVIS WOULD LOCK HIMSELF IN THE LABORATORY AND A WORKDAY OF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

**THIS COUNTY WILL  
GROW RICH WITH IT  
AND BECAUSE**

YOU STAY OUT OF THAT  
CLOSET, ANDREW! WORK  
YOUR OWN BUSINESS!  
JUST TEND TO YOUR  
BUTTERFLIES!

AND WHEN THE LABORATORY HAD NO "CUSTOMERS," JARVIS WOULD LOOK HIMSELF IN ALL DAY... THUNDERING... CLANKING... BUZZING...

FATHER, PLEASE COME UP  
FOR DINNER! OR THIS IS  
GOING TO BE UNPLEASANT

LET HIM PLAY  
 AROUND DOWN  
 THERE! I'M NOT  
 LETTING MY  
 DINNER GET COOL!



ONE NIGHT, JUST BEFORE SUPPER, THE APARTMENT ABOVE THE MORTUARY WAS SUDDENLY FILLED WITH A HUMMING SOUND COMING FROM THE LAB. ELAINE STARTLED AROUSE.

FATHER! COME UP! YOUR SUPPER'S GETTING COLD! HONESTLY, ANDREW...SOME-TIMES I THINK FATHER IS IN HIS DOTAGE!

YOU'RE TELLING ME? LOOK AT THESE OBITUARY NOTICES JAMES CROOK FUNERAL HOME... SIX, SEVEN...NINE BODIES THEY HANDED TODAY, THEY KNOW THE SCORE! HE DON'T HANDLE NINE A WEEK!



BODIES' COMPOSED' GADAVERS' I'M SICK OF IT! SICK OF EVERYTHING! FATHER IF YOU DON'T COME UP THIS MINUTE, I'LL...

CHOK! ELAINE! LISTEN TO THIS! IT'S AN OBIT!



ANDREW'S FACE DRAINED WHITE. HIS HANDS SHOOK...

"MR. JARVIS EDWARDS REGRETFULLY ANNOUNCES HIS DEATH AT 6:30 P.M. THIS EVENING. OBTAINING IS HIS DAUGHTER, ELAINE TULLY. BURIAL WILL BE FROM THE JARVIS EDWARDS MORTUARY."



ELAINE SHOT A QUICK GLANCE AT THE KITCHEN CLOCK...BEREAVED MOMENTARILY...THEN WHISPERED:

FATHER...SAY!

IT...IT'S SOME SORT OF JOKE? IT.



THE HUMMING FROM THE LABORATORY DRONED ON AND ON. ELAINE SAWE A LITTLE WHISPERING CRY AND DARTED DOWN THE STAIRS. ANDREW CLOSE AT HER HEELS, THEY FLUNG OPEN THE LAB DOOR AND STOPPED...FROZEN STRAHL-INE IN GRANITE HORROR AT WHAT THEY SAW.



THE BLOODLESS CORPSE OF JARVIS EDWARDS LAY ON THE COLD MARBLE TABLE. AND OVER HIM, THE WEIRD MACHINE WITH THE METAL ARMS AND THE SPRING SCALPEL AND THE CLUTCHING CLAWS AND THE ROBBES AND JARS AND PUMPS AND NEEDLES HUMMED AND CLICKED AND FINISHED OFF THE EMBALMING JOB. IT HAD STARTED AT 6:30 P.M. A JOB THAT JARVIS EDWARDS HIMSELF WOULD HAVE CONSIDERED "A WORK OF ART".



HEH, HEH! SO THE OLD BOY BUILT HIMSELF HIS OWN MORTICIAN, EHY? WELL, THAT'S ONE WAY OF UNDERTAKING ONE'S OWN UNDERTAKING. WELL, THAT ABOUT EMBALMS ONE'S MAD FOR THIS ISSUE.

WELL, I'LL SEE YOU ALL AGAIN IN MY MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT! TILL THEN, THIS IS YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER HOPEING YOU'LL HAVE A HORRIBLE SHOCK END OF 'BYE, NOW...



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oil, the lubricating qualities of Motyl, the grease, would metal, with the heat-sealing properties of Vaseline, the natural product whose particles expand under heat (Up to 10 times original size).

Just squeeze Power Seal out of the tube into your motor's cylinders through the spark plug openings. It will spread over pistons, piston rings and cylinder walls in your engine room and it will PLATE every surface with a smooth, white, metallic film. That's what it does. No amount of pressure can scrape it off. No amount of heat can break it down. It fills the cracks, scratches and openings caused by engine wear. It closes the gap between worn piston rings and cylinders with an automatic, self-expanding seal that stops oil pumping, stops gas blow-by and restores compression. No more piston slapping, no more engine knocking. You get more power, speed, mileage.

This genuine plate is self-lubricating too for Motyl, the atomized metal lubricant, restores friction as nothing else can! It is the only lubricant indestructible enough to be used in U. S. motor racing plants and jet engines. It never drains down, never leaves your engine dry. Even when your car has been standing for weeks, even in cold weather, you can start it in a flash, because the lubricant is in the metal itself. That's why you'll need amazingly little oil. You'll get hundreds even thousands of more miles per quart.

#### TRY IT FIRST!

You don't take a penny. Prove to yourself this Power Seal will make your car run like new. Put it in your engine on 10 days. Free Trial. If you are not getting better performance out of your car than you thought possible—if you have not stopped oil burning and have not increased gas mileage—return the empty tube and get your money back in full. Power-Seal is absolutely foolproof, it comes from the factory on an easy way. It can only improve and protect your motor.



**POWER SEAL MAKES WORN OUT TAD ENGINE RUN LIKE NEW**

Here are the Test Engineer's detailed reports showing the mechanical results in comparison obtained on a 1938 Ford Sedan car that had run for 45,000 miles. Ignition, POWER SEAL, lubrication increased gas and power, reduced gas consumption, cut oil burning nearly 50%.

	Cyl. 1	Cyl. 2	Cyl. 3	Cyl. 4	Cyl. 5	Cyl. 6	Cyl. 7
BEFORE	95 lbs.	95 lbs.	100 lbs.	95 lbs.	95 lbs.	95 lbs.	95 lbs.
AFTER	115 lbs.	115 lbs.	117 lbs.	115 lbs.	115 lbs.	115 lbs.	115 lbs.

#### BEST INVESTMENT WE EVER MADE, SATISFIED DRIVER-OWNER

We simply wanted the POWER SEAL for convenience and made an extra supply of shipments. Compression readings were taken before and after and showed a big improvement in both runs. As a result the motor stopped a few days, took up and power which was especially noticeable at full throttle. When compressed in time was the sharp increase in oil consumption. In one day we got actually better mileage a quart a day and night we have saved \$1.75 in oil alone using the POWER SEAL. We applied a month ago. In the other side oil consumption was cut practically in half. We have also been saving money on our mileage. All of all POWER SEAL saved us to be put about the best investment we ever made. It paid for itself in two weeks and has been saving money ever since. We are in the middle of comparing the cost of oil and mileage that would have cost us a hundred dollars. (Tom Test, Des Moines, N. I.)

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Simply send the coupon and your Power Seal shipment will be sent to you at once. C-12 D. plus postage and handling charges. We will send the postage and handling charges money order and return charge. I want you to be satisfied. No money order, no order the Regular Mail, only 20¢. No money order, no order the Regular Mail, only 20¢. Power Seal is now available only by mail from abroad the coupon at once.

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Send a small fee of 20¢ for the sample of the POWER SEAL. (If you want to see the product in the original tube, please send 50¢ for the sample.) I want you to be satisfied. No money order, no order the Regular Mail, only 20¢. No money order, no order the Regular Mail, only 20¢. Power Seal is now available only by mail from abroad the coupon at once.

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## I TRAINED THESE MEN



He used to expect and get  
less than this when training  
Edward E. in 1944 a radio  
and television man—did not  
know it. He is now a  
Philadelphia.

To see results in Radio-  
Television work, four men  
will be with you, you  
know with my work.  
Glen, Princeton, New Jersey,  
and, Canada.



He is doing Radio and  
Television work for  
you. Now have my own  
show I am on every day  
—J. J. —Cable Radio, N.Y.  
Philadelphia, Pa.



Now with WOOD, WOOD  
radio station he has  
radio training for you  
Radio-Television work  
—J. J. —Cable Radio, N.Y.  
New York, New York



By graduation had paid  
for himself, and, having  
received the salary  
of a radio man. —J. J.  
Philadelphia, New York  
New York, N.Y.

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VETERANS  
UNDER 65 YEARS**

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THAT'S WHY WE'VE BEEN A LEADER IN TRAINING BY  
DOING. You get parts I furnish to build many circuits  
common to Radio and Television, as part of my Correspondence  
Course, you build many things, including low power  
transmission things at first. You put it "on the air," perform  
demonstrations required of broadcasting operators. With my  
Correspondence Course you build  
modern Radio, etc. The Mail  
Shopper you build to make  
money from ads. Many stu-  
dents make \$10, \$15 a week  
extra doing complete sets  
in spare time while train-  
ing. Courses before will  
bring back showing other  
equipment you build. It's  
all yours to keep.



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technicians, engineers. Government Aviation, Police Dept. Radio-voice  
Radio Two-Way Radio Communications for buses, taxis, trucks, etc.,  
are important and growing fields. Television is moving ahead fast.



About 100 Training schools are open  
on the air. Thousands of students being  
taught. Used TV job opening up by  
National, American, etc.

To which there are more. Television  
sets. Thousands more are being sold  
every week. Get a job where you can  
earn money selling and doing, including.

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*Charles Atlas*

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